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DEC. 11
1945

NEW MASSES

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WILL CHINA BE AMERICA'S INDIA?

by FREDERICK V. FIELD

THE CASE OF EZRA POUND

Traitor or Holy Idiot? by ISIDOR SCHNEIDER

TESTIMONY FOR NUREMBERG

by JOSEPH NORTH

REALISM AND THE SOVIET NOVEL

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FROM the way it looked, the record crowd at NM's recent Writers and Artists Ball had a fine time. That dance is one institution that has stayed good through the years and the thirty-fourth seemed better than usual, perhaps because so many old cronies were together for the first time in so long. The dance committee has but one regret, which is that due to extreme last-minute circumstances, the scheduled entertainers were unable to appear.

THOUGH we're not as good at deduction as our favorite fiction detectives, we can safely bet that many people are in our predicament—busy, with days slipping by so quickly that with a mental thud we suddenly realize one week has ended and another begun. What usually follows that is a weak feeling in the middle as we contemplate the approaching holidays and the short time left to do any planning or shopping. Well, we have refused to let it throw us, and we found our solution without the aid of a sleuth. You can too. See the back cover and page 31. Don't let Christmas be a creep!

JOY DAVIDMAN GRESHAM has done it again — another baby: boy; name: Douglas; weight (when he was born): nine pounds, six ounces; approximate age at this writing: four weeks. Our best to everybody concerned.

THE second half of A. Sokolov's article, "Democracy: East or West," announced for this week, has for technical reasons had to be postponed. It will appear next week.

M. DE A.

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ESTABLISHED 1911

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NEW MASSES
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WHY WE INTERVENE IN CHINA

By FREDERICK V. FIELD

Comment on Patrick J. Hurley's resignation as ambassador to China appears on page 18.

MR. BYRNES has finally let the American people in on the secret. He has told us why some 60,000 American marines have been sent into North China since the close of hostilities against Japan. It is true that Byrnes' interpretation differs from that of Lieutenant General Wedemeyer, otherwise known as the Scobie of China. Wedemeyer has been saying that our troops, ships, planes, tanks, guns, military advisers and the rest of our interventionist paraphernalia were in China for the purpose of aiding Chiang Kai-shek's government in disarming the Japanese. Other American officials have given the impression that we were intervening for the sake of "peace and security." Patrick J. Hurley, the former American Ambassador to China, from his strategically located observation post in Santa Fe, New Mexico gave his explanation the other day by saying that "The Communist armed party attempted to have part of the Japanese army surrender to them. The purpose of this was to procure Japanese arms to attempt to set up a separate government in China or destroy the government of the Republic of China."

The Secretary of State apparently felt that these explanations were not satisfying the unfortunate curiosity of Americans regarding the immediate aftermath of the war in the Far East, nor the anxiety of the families and friends of the marines who had been placed in a position of such obvious danger. He therefore made a statement to the press which will doubtless bring solace and comfort to all who for whatever reason have expressed concern over the trend of America's China policy.

Mr. Byrnes revealed that the marines were sent to North China to help the Japanese government. The American government, he says, promised the Japanese, shortly after the surrender, that it would return all Japanese soldiers to Japan. It is therefore our duty to fulfill this pledge.

So that's the way it is. The United States is risking the lives of several divisions of marines—the same divisions, incidentally, which saw the heaviest combat at Tinian, Saipan and Okinawa; it is supporting a feudal-fascist-minded minority in China which stands for everything against which the war was fought; it is actively engaged in preventing the Chinese forces on the spot from accepting the surrender of Japanese arms and personnel; it is deliberately provoking a new war in eastern Asia—and, according to its Secretary of State, it is doing all of this in order to live up to an arrangement secretly made with the Japanese government!

Mr. Byrnes should take a moment off from his frenzied efforts to destroy the genuine peace and security for which the war was fought to recall that pledges made to the American people and to our Allies in the United Nations are more important than promises made to a fascist government which has just been defeated. He should relax his mad attempt to impose "democracy" *a la* South Carolina all over the world and give himself time to recollect that decent-minded people do not make promises, pledges or even arrangements with the fascist government which plunged them into devastating war. The Japanese government comes last, not first, Mr. Byrnes!

AMERICAN intervention in China, however, cannot be dismissed by ridiculing the callous stupidity of the Secretary of State. It is plain that he and Wedemeyer, as well as the White House, cannot afford to give us the true explanation of our armed intervention against Chinese democracy. Such an explanation would immediately arouse the angry protest of the whole population, for it would reveal the betrayal of the anti-fascist cause and the charting of new wars. The administration consequently resorts to a series of mutually contradictory subterfuges, of which Mr. Byrnes' recent utterance merely ranks as the most outrageous.

There has been no serious attempt made by US government or Army officials to explain American interventionist policy in China. It is therefore necessary to turn elsewhere. *Life* and *Time*, publications of the ultra-reactionary Henry Luce, have labored hard to justify this policy of intervention. I shall, however, pass over Mr. Luce's editorials because of their malicious disregard for facts, their slanderous attacks on the Chinese democrats, including of course the Communists. The well known imperialist leanings of the publisher make them no more than the skillfully written fulminations of a reactionary fanatic. Let us, therefore, look at the case for intervention as explained and defended by a more "reasonable" source of which the New York *Times* is one example.

On November 23 the *Times* ran a long lead editorial on the subject. It is the most serious effort to defend the interventionist policy that has come to my attention. It finds the situation in China alarming. The Chinese civil war, the editorial admits, "is lighting new fires in the East which could set all Asia aflame again." American forces, it points out, are in the direct path of any new conflagration. "Under these circumstances," the *Times* continues, "it behooves the American government and the American people to be very clear about the reasons which brought our forces to the Orient, and about the policy we wish to pursue there." The editorial proceeds to summarize "the fundamental causes, principles and methods of our policy in the Far East."

The following five points are then made by the *Times* by way of summarizing this policy: (1) "The immediate issue over which the United States was plunged into war was American aid to China, which prevented Japan from conquering that great and friendly nation." (2) The point is made that American aid was extended to the only authority to which it could be extended, namely, the Chiang Kai-shek government.

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To have extended aid to any other authority in China, the *Times* believes, would have constituted "flagrant intervention in China's internal affairs." (3) By the surrender terms the Japanese armies in China were ordered to surrender to Chiang Kai-shek. The latter "has been delayed in carrying out his part of the surrender terms" because of the Communist "revolt" and so American forces are now aiding him to do so. American troops, the *Times* continues, "are not there to fight the Chinese Communists, or to take part in a Chinese civil war, but to complete the Japanese surrender in conformity with obligations assumed by the American government."

(4) "Whatever aid must still be extended to China must likewise go to the national government, because any other course would undermine the United Nations." (5) The last point must be quoted in full: "The national government of China is not yet as democratic as we should like it to be, but it offers more hope for liberty than the totalitarian regime of the Chinese Communists. The national government is not only pledged to the establishment of democracy after a long period of tutelage; it is already beginning to extend democracy to the opposition. The Chinese Communists liquidate all opposition."

The New York *Times* concludes from this analysis that it would be "futile" and "dangerous" to withdraw American forces from the danger zone of China.

It is impossible for genuine democrats to accept the *Times'* explanation of the immediate issue over which we were plunged into war. The plain fact of the matter, known to any one who will review the history and statistics of the pre-war period, is that the United States aided Japan, not China. The Japanese attempt to conquer China began decades ago at the time of the Sino-Japanese War of 1895, continued with scarcely an interruption during the next thirty-five years, during which the Nishihara loans and the Twenty-one Demands were highlights, took a more violent form with the seizure of Manchuria in 1931, and reached its full climax with the big war of 1937. At no time during this entire period, until the middle of 1940, did American help to China amount to a row of beans. What little comfort China got out of so-called American friendship was limited, in the earlier years, to checks which the United States, as one imperialist power, imposed upon other imperialist powers. In the later years, and even throughout 1940, American economic and political aid to Japan far outweighed the picayune "conscience money" we slipped to China.

No, Japan did not fail to conquer China because of American aid. It failed because from September 1937 on for a crucial year and a half a fairly effective unity was maintained among the Chinese people against the Japanese invaders. From 1939 on the only forces that had both stopped the Japanese advance and liberated vast areas which the Japanese had previously conquered were the Chinese guerrillas under Communist leadership. And surely the New York *Times* does not maintain that the Chinese Communists were getting American aid!

The issue for which the American people went to war was that of exterminating fascism which, with the Japanese attack upon Pearl Harbor, had struck a vital blow at our future existence as a nation. But, says the *Times*, "The immediate issue over which the United States was plunged into war was American aid to China!" I would be ashamed if my seven-year-old daughter gave such an answer.

It is true that under conditions of internal Chinese unity the only authority to which the United States could properly give aid was the Chiang Kai-shek government. Under such circumstances aid given to Nanking, or later to Chungking, would have been distributed to *all* Chinese forces capable of fighting the enemy. Unhappily during the brief period of unity in 1937 and 1938 the United States was providing Japan with the stuff from which battleships, tanks, and big guns are made; to the Chinese it was giving chicken-feed. The argument used by the *Times* therefore never arose as a reality.

The editors of the *Times* doubtless argue that when we finally got around to sending war material into China, from 1943 on, we were then obligated to deliver it over to Chiang Kai-shek. For this period their argument is based on the facts. That is exactly what the United States did do. But the *Times* purposely overlooks an important fact: that American material was delivered to Chungking *for the purpose of fighting the war against Japan.* It was soon suspected by our government and military authorities that this material was not being so used. Investigations, numerous investigations, were made on the spot. I would like to challenge the *Times* to name one report, whether at the time secret or public, that did not point out to Washington that Chiang Kai-shek was withholding such material from the fighting against Japan (of which his troops were doing exceedingly little anyway) and instead storing it for future use against the Communist-led Eighth Route and New Fourth Armies.

The fact of the matter, as the *Times* well knows, and as its own correspondent, Brooks Atkinson, many times reported, was that President Roosevelt by the spring of 1944 began to develop a new policy whereby the United States would establish and maintain direct contact with the guerrillas who were doing the actual fighting and, if forced to by Chiang Kai-shek's recalcitrance, supply these patriotic Chinese forces at the expense of Chiang's inactive troops. No win-the-war policy could have concluded otherwise.

THE *Times*, third, justifies the present intervention on the ground that by the surrender terms the Japanese were ordered to surrender in China only to Chiang Kai-shek's forces. It fails to point out that these surrender terms were issued by MacArthur who with Hurley, the former Ambassador to China, had once composed the notorious Secretary of War-Chief of Staff team which had fired on the Hunger Marchers in Washington during the Hoover days and who have hardly earned the right of defending democracy. These arrogant American reactionaries were fully aware of the implications of that surrender order. It meant armed intervention against Chinese democracy and that was precisely what they intended to do.

At the time of the capitulation everybody knew that it would be impossible for Chiang Kai-shek to accept the surrender of the major part of the Japanese forces in China, for the simple reason that his troops, not having engaged the enemy, weren't anywhere near them at the end of the war. That in itself should have invalidated the deal MacArthur wanted to put over. Chiang Kai-shek and his reactionary clique had lost the right to accept the surrender because they had deliberately refrained from the heaviest fighting which had brought about the surrender. It was not a Communist "revolt," as the *Times* would have us believe, that delayed Chiang in the surrender ceremonies.

It is at this point in its brief that the *Times* drags out the threadbare argument that the American marines have intervened solely in order to effect the surrender of Japanese arms. No newspaper reader can believe that any more.

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For one thing we know that the marines have landed at strategic locations far removed from the centers of Japanese strength in North China. Secondly, we know that the main task of the marine force has been to hold these locations pending the arrival of Chiang Kai-shek's troops which, upon arrival, have not gone after the Japanese to disarm them but have headed straight for the Eighth Route Army. And third, instead of disarming the Japanese troops, both the American forces and the Kuomintang armies have *used the Japanese soldiers* to do the same dirty work upon which they were engaged. In practice this has turned out to be a coalition military movement by Americans, Kuomintang troops and armed Japanese against China's democratic forces.

The *Times'* next point is that unless this intervention continues we will be undermining the United Nations. By the time this stage in the argument was reached the editors of the *Times* were obviously so mesmerized by their preceding "logic" that white became black and black white. It would take a prodigious and totally irresponsible imagination in reading even their own biased news columns to find any evidence that the present intervention was adding to the unity and cordiality of the United Nations.

The final point about the "totalitarian regime of the Chinese Communists" and the "noble" pledge of Chungking to establish democracy is taken whole cloth out of the pages of the Luce-Hearst-Patterson-McCormick press. It is denied by every single dispatch on the current Chinese situation which the *Times* has printed. It is a bald-faced reversal of the truth. There have been countless first-hand investigations of the Chungking regime and of the Yenan setup. Not a single one of these non-Communist sources, including the *Times'* own Brooks Atkinson, bears out the ridiculous contention of the *Times;* every one of them gives detailed documentation to the contrary. The Kuomintang is totalitarian. The Kuomintang liquidates all opposition. The Communists have introduced the first genuine democracy China has experienced; instead of liquidating their opposition they have instituted a coalition form of government and economy which incorporates all anti-Japanese, anti-fascist groups in the New Democracy.

The *Times* does not even present a logical conservative argument. And the reason for this is what we must now explore. The answer will lead us in the direction of the truth.

Who's loony now?

AMERICAN forces are not in China in order to disarm the Japanese. They are not there to fulfill a pledge to the fascist government of Japan. Nor are they there to maintain law and order.

They are there in the first place to impose upon China the pro-fascist, totalitarian dictatorship which Chiang Kai-shek has failed to impose with the smaller power of his own government. What he couldn't do the Americans are trying to do for him. This means accomplishing something that neither the Kuomintang during its ten years of civil war before 1937 nor the Japanese since 1937 have been able to do. It means eliminating the military and political strength of the Chinese Communists *and their many Chinese allies of different political persuasion.* It is a task in which the Americans will also fail. But in attempting to accomplish it they will succeed only in bringing disastrous civil war to China, turmoil to the whole of eastern Asia, and for years to come, disruption of the peace and security of the Far East.

American forces are there, second, in order to preserve the privileged imperialist position in China of *certain,* not all, American business interests. More than that, the defeat of Japan and Germany and their elimination as immediate aggressor powers, as well as the weaken-

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ing of British and French imperialism, gives American imperialism a relatively free hand in China for the first time in history. American reaction has the unprecedented opportunity to carve out an India for itself. This can be accomplished only if the Chinese people can be prevented from developing democracy, from winning their own freedom from feudalism and imperialism, and from becoming genuinely independent.

American economy will not benefit by such a process; it will suffer severely. The only momentary solution for American capitalism as a whole lies in developing markets for the export of capital and consumer goods and for the investment of funds in undeveloped regions like China. That would substantially add to factory production and employment within the United States. But it would require, first of all, an independent Chinese democracy to accomplish it. The present American policy, however, is not that at all. It is the reverse. It is the policy of preserving for a few American giants and their satellites the limited, but thoroughly controlled, economy of a colony. A thousand middle-sized American businessmen will thereby lose out; but two or three giant trusts will retain and even extend their monopoly.

There is a third reason why the Marines are invading North China for the pro-fascists in Chungking. If democracy should happen to triumph in China it would triumph also in Indo-China, in Indonesia, in the Philippines, in Malaya, Burma and India, and even in Japan. And that would mean the beginning of the end of fascism and imperialism. So, naturally enough, imperialists are just as anxious to prevent such developments as the Chinese feudalists in Chungking are anxious to prevent the spread of individual and cooperative enterprise within their country. China, because of its great size and location, is the key to the future of nearly half the population of the world. Reaction has a big stake in keeping democracy away from it. A stake so big, indeed, that it is worth considerable economic sacrifice in the way of lost market opportunities to achieve it.

We must, finally, look at the Chinese situation from the long-term point of view of the reactionaries. From their angle the war went badly against Germany. Munich in the end failed. The phony war failed. A coalition was formed against Hitler which included the Soviet Union as the principal military factor and which drew

(*Continued on page* 21)

TESTIMONY FOR NUREMBERG

By JOSEPH NORTH

As I write men in Nuremberg are sitting in judgment upon those who passed for men in Germany. News of that trial brought me back to the notes which I had jotted down when I visited the concentration camp at Dachau. Rumors flew about Paris the week before V-E Day that the great day would soon be announced. The opportunity arose to visit Dachau the day all of us awaited, and I decided to go there instead of celebrating victory on the Place de la Concorde. *I have gathered my notes together, and pass them on to you. I believe that those of us who had the occasion to be first-hand witnesses should tell what we saw. I believe, by and large, the American mind still rejects the monstrous reality that there were men—there are men—who sliced pieces of skin from human beings to make parlor knick-knacks, lampshades, decorative pieces, and other doodads. I want to tell you of those anonymous heroes who lived throughout all this, who saw their friends, their brothers, their mothers and fathers, go to the crematoria. And what they were like when I saw them that day when they learned they had conquered, and their captors were captured.*

THE Douglass bomber that bore us to Munich spiraled down over the airfield, banked over a half-wrecked cathedral, and landed on the golden-brown Bavarian soil. A knot of GI's popped out of the airdrome and when the propeller died down they asked us was it true, is it over? When we nodded, a tow-headed fellow from Jersey City by the name of Kowalski mumbled "So that's that," and helped us down from the plane.

The captain assigned to guide us handed us his card with smart military etiquette, then told us he hailed from the Bronx, and later mentioned quietly that he had come from Munich in 1933, had escaped with his father, a Jew. Now he was home again, had returned to his boyhood neighborhood, visited his childhood home which still stood unbombed, walked around to the public school he had attended, which was bombed; and he had found no neighbors, nobody he knew. He spoke impeccable English and said he was glad to inform us that the building Chamberlain had visited and where they had signed the Munich *Diktat* lay flat on the ground, a perfect bit of pin-point bombing. Later he took me around to the *Bierhaus* where Hitler plotted the putsch. It looked strangely like Luchow's on Fourteenth Street, in Manhattan, and on the floor I found strewn the last editions of the *Voelkischer Beobachter* with Hitler's picture hogging the front page. Glancing through its contents I discovered a review of W. L. White's book, *Report on the Russians*.

Another GI took me down into the subbasement and there, amid the big, empty beer vats, I saw a vast pile of something reaching to the ceiling, which I couldn't make out in the gloom. When my eyes got accustomed to the dark I saw clearly enough what it was: a heap, twenty feet high, of Torahs, the holy scroll of the Jews. The GI didn't say anything, nor did I, but for some reason a flash from *Dr. Caligari's Cabinet* popped into my head, something inexpressibly weird and distorted. When I climbed upstairs and into the sunlight the captain looked at me intently and we didn't say anything. He had guessed I was Jewish, I suppose, and there was nothing to say. Not then.

THE road to Dachau wound through prim Teutonic countryside and the cottages stood neat with rambler roses climbing up the sides and the plots of ground like our Victory gardens all about them. The highways appeared well-kept, orderly, as you would expect in peacetime Germany, and we passed a stream of cyclists who turned out to be liberated slaves—mostly Russians and Poles—who had taken the bicycles from their former oppressors, most of whom had hidden or fled. The ex-slaves cycled

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furiously, their backs bent, going nobody knew where. I caught a glimpse of their faces, impassive, their eyes straight ahead, and they did not glance up as we sped by.

The bus halted and we descended into the camp. Dachau, Dachau, I kept mumbling to myself. This is it. How many years I had known its name, its connotations—and now I stood here, under the Bavarian sun, inside the gates; and how many men and women like myself had passed through these gates since Hitler built the place September 1933, a few months after he won power? I looked at the solid SS barracks and noticed they were empty, the windows open as though to air the place; and on the walls they had stenciled that silhouette of a stealthy character in a slouch hat with the legend in Gothic script, "Beware, the enemy is listening."

A half dozen GI's strolled over with DDT spraying guns, handling them like submachine-guns, told us to line up, undo our shirts, loosen our belts so they could get the DDT in the proper places, for a typhus epidemic was raging inside and 150 liberated prisoners were dying every day of typhus. I stood there with arms outstretched while the GI pumped powder on me. Fifteen of us stared, arms outstretched, at the vast buildings and at the files of men off in the distance in striped suits. This was it, I kept thinking, Dachau, this is Dachau. Thaelmann had come through these gates and stayed. Eric Muhsam, von Ossietzky, how many others, had been through these gates and had stayed. Dachau.

A FEW minutes later we crossed a medieval moat to the inner camp and there the barracks stood, stretching off into the distance, while thousands of men milled around still in their striped suits; and as I looked at them I saw it all.

I had read stories in the Paris *Tribune* (you remember them) that these liberated men had scrambled for a piece of bread when the GI's had broken into the camp, and I wanted to see these men for myself. How does man behave, after living with death and worse than death, when the day of liberation arrives? These were the men who had dared everything—life, happiness, family, career—to fight their unsung battle. Had the enemy, defeated, defeated them, broken them, transformed them into something less than men, as the news stories suggested?

What had happened to these men who walked about like human beings you cannot imagine. Peripatetic skeletons, skin taut over skull and bones, only the gleam within their eye-sockets related them to the appearance of the living, only their upright posture identified them with us who eat three times a day. Here they were about us, milling in every direction, 35,000 of them, and I found it hard to breathe, as though I were running rather than walking among them.

WE APPROACHED a small building at the extreme boundary of the camp. A sudden breeze brought the unmistakable stench of death our way and then I knew what was approaching. The bodies lay stacked one on the other, piled up as high as a tall man, male and female bodies, naked, rotting in the hot springtime sun.

Our guide said those of us who wished could go into the crematorium building; the others could, if they preferred, stand at a safe distance. Four of us decided to go among the aisles formed by these stacks of cadavers.

Now we approached them, the four of us—myself, two journalists from Palestine, and the European editor of the *News Chronicle*, a Pole who had been the late General Sikorsky's aide. Now we stood among them, in a temple of corpses, the long dead bodies of heroes and innocents from all lands of Europe. I looked at the faces so near me I could touch them, the mouths agape, the dead eyes staring, open, as though in astonishment and disbelief that this could happen.

The short hair of men, the long hair of women, their hands outstretched, their fingers clawed, thousands of faces in that uniform stare of death; 2,500 dead faces, 5,000 hands outstretched, extended outward from their bodies as though clutching for something, clutching for what? What had they reached for that last moment of agony? What had their fingers clawed for that final moment that the world withheld from them? Answer that, you who sit in judgment on those who pass for men! You and I walking erect on this planet know, and perhaps we can still give them what their lifeless hands failed to reach.

Kollwitz.

Passing through the pillars of the dead, we entered the building that housed the gas-chamber and the crematoria. You know by now how Nazi perfidy had written on the door of the gas-chamber "To the Shower Bath." I looked at the little sign, in Gothic letters, and pages from my high-school German primer leaped strangely into my mind's-eye. Then you stand inside the gas chamber. I glanced at my companions, the two Jews from Palestine, and the Pole. At such moments men's faces are masks and no man speaks. We saw the peep-hole, covered with thick glass, through which the executioner peered. What did he think as he turned the wheel that filled the room with horror? Where is he today? Is he among those in the dock? What is he thinking? What are his dreams at night?

The crematorium itself—the ovens. Above the apertures on neat little brass plates is the name of the Munich company that manufactured them, undoubtedly a safe, respectable firm that paid adequate quarterly dividends to stockholders who may, or may not, probably not, be among those listed for the trial of war criminals. My hunch, as I looked at the nameplates, was that they would stand clear of the charges; for after all, what had they to do with this, as they motored to their offices, back to their homes for supper in the evening, took in a good movie or a Wagnerian concert, and went to the cathedral of a Sunday? And on the wall of the crematorium hung a sign, "All attendants will please wash their hands after the day's work."

When we came outside into the sun we had to pass through the files of the dead again; you couldn't pass without thinking: it could have happened in America. Staring at the staring eyes and the outstretched hands, at the overwhelming anonymity of this scene unparalleled in all man's history, I thought, these are my people—here lay men and women who believed in man's inherent goodness, here lay trade-unionists, doctors, scientists, the humble and the famous, somewhere here lay the brother of Karel Capek, the author of *RUR*, the man who had created the original "robots." This pile, I thought, could lie outside New York, outside Atlanta, outside Chicago if Herbert Hoover could be Gerald Smith's Hindenburg. Here in this pyramid of cadavers lay men like you and me, and men our people choose as leaders—men like Henry Wallace, and Philip Murray, like Sidney Hillman and R. J. Thomas,

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men like Ben Davis and Bill Foster, like Harold Ickes and Francis J. MacMahon, men like—you name them. All those of the Left, and Center—anybody with the manhood to speak against the bestiality of fascism, regardless of his political complexion. This was Dachau, but it could be Detroit.

II

I DO not wish to dwell on these scenes of infinite carnage: I want to tell now rather of the men who survived. What of the 35,000 who walked in the midday sun, clad in the gray striped uniforms? Were they still men? Had the torture and the hunger wrenched from them the dignity of man? I had read, with misgiving, the stories that they had been reduced to something below *homo sapiens*, something akin to the jungle creature, snarling for a crust of bread, clawing one another for a bite to eat. Could the monster of fascism devour the human soul? Prim-faced, bespectacled Himmler convinced Herr Krupp it could be done, and had built the vast industry known as the Gestapo for the soul-reduction process. Was he right?

I talked with as many survivors as I could; Czechs, Russians, Frenchmen, Poles; Catholics, Protestants, Jews. I walked and talked with a young Negro from the Belgian Congo who had come to Brussels to study and who had been captured in the Partisan army known as the White Army. But their story is best told by the young Jewish doctor from Lodz, Poland. We Jews know one another; when I came into the prisoner's hospital, Dr. Chaim Greenberg singled me out and asked *"Redst Yiddish?"* When I answered in the affirmative he took my hand, held it in both of his, and looked into my eyes. And then he talked, the words tumbling from his lips in an eagerness he dared not show these past six years he had managed to survive here.

He told me the story I cabled you from Dachau; yes, the Underground had survived, had worked under the eyes of the SS men. Remember the story I told of the twelve Jewish children who had been smuggled out of the death ward of Dachau? Jewish parents, rounded up before dawn in Warsaw, had frantically taken their children with them, and in the confusion, had got their young into the camp. The young doctor knew they were consigned to the crematorium, and with that holy instinct of mankind's, that concern for the young, he had decided that these children should somehow be saved. "I am no Communist," he said to me, "but I had become friendly with a Communist in the camp whom I thought to be part of the Underground, which I had reason to believe existed. I managed to suggest my plan to him, that these children be smuggled out of the camp. My friend said nothing, but looked at me and said he would let me know. The next day he whispered to me that if I were able to dose the children with a sleeping drug so that they would not awaken for several hours and cry out, he would carry them out inside the knapsack he wore. His task—he was a technician of some sort—permitted him to leave the camp every day. He would take care of the rest, he said. I agreed. Later he told me he walked outside the camp, left a child each day with another member of the Underground who lived nearby, and that night the child would be carried to another home, and so on, until the child was safely far away. Thus we saved the twelve children."

I asked him how widespread the Underground had been. He shook his head sadly. Not widespread enough, he indicated. And then he told me that the SS had diabolically planted among the prisoners, stooges from the underworld paid to spy upon the men of the Underground. Furthermore, he said, those prisoners who had no philosophy of resistance, "no political understanding," proved untrustworthy, and were the first to wilt under the terrific pressure. "Many of them succumbed, became beasts, became informers, for an extra slice of bread, for another piece of sausage in their broth." These, he said, informed the SS of any slight infraction of the rules; and many a man had gone to nameless death for slipping a slice of bread to politicals and Jews, who received the lowest ration of all. "Anti-Semitism," he said, "is a hardy beast. It is hard to kill. And even here, where all men lived on the lowest scale imaginable, Jews were persecuted by fellow-prisoners. I know too many of my own countrymen who sent Jews to the crematorium because they had somehow got hold of an extra illegal potato or had accepted a slice of bread from a fellow-prisoner."

But the informers, he told me, were in the minority. Most men remained men. They turned their faces the other way when they saw infractions of the rules, even though it would be to their benefit to pass the word to the SS guard.

"But now we have won," he said suddenly, his face aglow. And suddenly I looked at him. The dark Jewish eyes sunken deep in his face, a face that somehow retained its youthfulness, a face lit up with something you call hope, confidence, serenity. He had won that inner peace, that resignation to death should it come, but with confidence that come what may, he would never abandon the ideal of human fraternity. I have seen that look before, and I believe I can recognize it wherever I find it. I have seen it in the faces of people like Pasionaria, of Oviedo, of Jose Diaz of Madrid, of Elizabeth Gurley Flynn of New York, of Marcel Cachin of Paris. This young Jewish doctor had it; I was to see it on other faces in Dachau.

"We have won," Chaim Greenberg had suddenly said as we looked outside the window of the hospital. "We—" he said, excitedly, "We." He took my arm and we went outside into the hot, dusty roadway between the numberless barracks. Thousands of men, from all parts of Europe, pushed forward in the tide of ragged, diseased humanity heading toward the parade grounds of the camp. Clad in their gray- and blue-striped uniforms, they made their way to the great prison drilling grounds where they were to celebrate V-E Day. They carried the banners of their homelands, the tricolor of France, the red banner of the Soviets, the standards of the Polish, the British, the Dutch, the Czech, the Yugoslav. We joined them. Gaunt men, many of them barely able to carry themselves, their withered flesh scarcely clothing their skeletons, they marched like men possessed; no man laughed. But they talked, breathing the air like wine. Liberty. The day of victory. "Our day came," the Jewish doctor said, and his grip tightened about my arm. "We have lived to see it. We have won."

Here a man passed us with a scrofulous face, his eyes almost hidden in a mass of pustulous sores; here another limped forward, a great clout of filthy bandage on his feet; here a younger man helped a stumbling gray-head along. We walked with two men who pushed a wheelbarrow bearing a third, whose face carried the unmistakable pallor of death. "He wants to live until he reaches the parade ground," Chaim Greenberg said to me. I looked at the man, his bony feet protruding over the edges of the wheelbarrow, his eyes feverish, searching the scene before him.

My nerves crackled at the awesome sight. Men stood on the parade grounds, lined up in scores of rows, stretching

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hundreds of yards from one end of the compound to the other. I watched them from a small eminence; as far as the eye could see they stood, shoulder to shoulder, in their striped prison uniforms, their heads shaven, their eyes gaunt, their grotesque boniness invested suddenly with immeasurable strength. They stood together and they sang—the *Marseillaise*, the *Internationale*.

My friend watched them, his face flushed red, and I felt as though he were incandescent, as though he would flare into flame any moment.

III

THESE were the men of Dachau. This, I submit, was the overwhelming reality of Dachau. Man had won over the monster. Man, inexhaustible, unconquered. Unconquerable. There they stood, their flesh diseased, their bones disintegrating, many with the spore of typhus in their veins, but their spirits unbroken.

Those who had put them on the rack are in the dock today. Not all, by far. Most of the guilty walk the streets of Germany free men. Many of the guilty walk the streets of America free men. Many are in our halls of Congress. Many plot the same fate for us, for the majority of America.

A scene in Dachau flashed through my mind as I wrote this. While marching to the parade ground, a small, withered youth with dark Jewish eyes stepped from the crowd and whispered, "*Bist a Yid?*" When I said yes, he replied, "My name is Schmuel Feinstein. I come from Warsaw. I have been here six years. I am seventeen years old. They burned my father and my mother here. They shot my older brother. I am alone." And he stepped back into the crowd.

I shall never forget his eyes. "I am alone," he said.

So long as one man bears his injury alone, then we are all of us alone. Then all of us shall meet the fate of Schmuel Feinstein, and the crematoria shall roar even in Detroit and Atlanta, in New York and Denver. And nameless Jew shall lie with nameless Gentile in anonymous heaps as did the dead of Dachau.

But I prefer to believe that enough of us have learned the unanimity of those who marched to the parade grounds in Dachau; and that we shall march together to overwhelm the architects of the crematoria.

These are a few of the things I remember when I read the headlines of the trials at Nuremberg.

IRANIAN TINDERBOX

By R. S. KAARGAR

FOR some understanding of what has been happening in Iran, I shall have to begin by writing about the British in that country. For the past few years the British have maintained an airtight censorship in Iran. There was the incident at Samirom in the British zone where tribesmen surrounded 1,200 Persian soldiers. For two weeks the besieged troops asked for help from the nearby garrison at Ispahan, but their pleas went unheeded and all were killed. In vain the liberal press kept demanding that Shahbakhti, the commanding general of the Ispahan garrison, be brought to justice. Nothing happened.

Clashes also occurred in the Fars Province, Iran's equivalent of the "Solid South" from the point of view of the British, between Iranian government troops and well-armed men of the notorious Nasir Kahn, chief of the Ghashghai underworld. When the government was on the point of subduing the Ghashghais, the British intervened and forced the government to compromise with the rebels, to allow them to keep their arms and to "elect" their chieftain to the Iranian Parliament. A few months later the formation of an "All-Iran Congress of Ilat [Tribes]" was reported. Considering the age-old dog-eat-dog relationship of their chieftains it was hard to believe this unlikely development until one heard that a British officer had been attached to the "Congress" headquarters in the Ghashghai region with the job of training the men of the region in modern methods of warfare and of supplying them with heavy armament.

These are only a few of the incidents which have occurred during the last four years in the British zone.

Throughout the war the leave-it-to-the-experts attitude of the British authorities in Iran barred the way not only to American correspondents, but also, in several instances, to American officials, with the result that Americans have heard next to nothing about the tremendous events in Iran during the last few years.

About a month ago the new Iranian ambassador, who had chosen to spend a forty-day vacation in London on his way to this country, came to the United States. The ambassador, who sports a perfect Oxford accent, had barely set foot on American soil when he began, at a press conference, the present anti-Soviet campaign over Iranian developments. A week later the Associated Press reported that "Iranian troops were rushed tonight [November 19] to the Soviet garrisoned Azerbaijan scene of armed outbreaks." Prominent place was given to the phrase "despite uncertainty whether the Russians would permit them to enter the tronble zone," and the following day [November 20] it was reported that the "Russians stopped them." Most newspapers followed the AP line.

From the point of view of the number of lives involved there was nothing sensational in this news. Seven persons had been reported killed, and this was unconfirmed. But the news was kept at white heat with anti-Soviet material furnished by Iranian authorities here and in London. Then a few days later the diplomatic correspondent of the *Times* of London reported that the events in Iran were "causing disquiet among well-informed quarters in Britain." Dispatches stopped talking about the military operations, but Iranian diplomats continued to ask the American and British governments to step in and do something about it. Soon Bevin, Eden and Byrnes joined voices to ask that the Russians leave Iran, knowing full well that the Soviet government had already stated that it would leave the country by March 2. In the meantime American newspapers added their own coals to the fire. C. L. Sulzberger contributed an article to the New York *Times* (November 25), datelined Stockholm, warning that the day would soon come when Soviet ships would be on the Persian Gulf, and that the United States should act quickly.

The story in the Sunday New York *Times* of November 25 was character-

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istic: Data were given as background: Territory 628,000 square miles, mostly desert or mountain. Population: 15,000,000, one-fifth made up of nomads. Iran is a link between Russia and the Persian Gulf. Oil production: 78,000,000 barrels annually. Atmosphere: Bedouin's tent and camel on one side, motor trucks and oil derrick on the other. Against such a peaceful background, the *Times* gave the Iranian ambassador's version of what happened in Iran. The ambassador, who for the last three years must have been studying public opinion polls from his spacious headquarters at the White Palace in Iran—he was Minister of Court before being assigned to the new post—said: "This so-called revolution or separatist movement doesn't in the least represent the public feelings of the people. It is not spontaneous. It was most certainly engineered."

THE trouble with all these gentlemen, including those of the Iranian governing class, is that they think of Iran only in terms of deserts and mountains and camels and oil and its geographic situation. For these people Iran is only a chessboard on which rival conquerors move pawns, leaving the chessboard just as it was before. But Iran happens to have 15,000,000 people with a long history of conquest and exploitation and torture and demagogy, plus all the antagonisms that make the history of an oppressed people.

Forty years ago, when these antagonisms reached a high point, the people rose in a *spontaneous* revolution against "*estebdad*," literally, despotism. To those who fought against it, it meant the whole feudal setup involved in despotism and foreign intervention. Also inherent in this feudalism was religious demagogy, although among the Iranian revolutionary leaders were a great number of enlightened clergymen.

Finally, after long struggles, a parliamentary system and a constitution were achieved. But foreign intervention was keen. Counterrevolutions were staged, and foreign imperialist powers and their puppets among the Persian feudal lords made efforts to weaken the young democracy. Came 1917. With the fall of the Czarist government in Russia, the whole policy of England toward Iran changed. British imperialism, which up to that time, as a measure of rivalry against the Czarist government, had at least paid lip service to the democratic form of government in Persia, started looking for a strong man who would be able to establish a dictatorship on the borders of the young Soviet State. Such a man was Reza Khan, a self-made man with the rank of general.

He hated the degenerate feudal nobility and was bitter over foreign intervention in Iran. After quelling a rebellion in the Northern Provinces, Reza Khan staged a *coup d'etat* with the help of an arrogant young journalist, Seyid Zia. A government was formed which lasted a hundred days, with Seyid Zia as premier and Reza Khan as the military strong man. Then Seyid was ousted and exiled, and Reza Khan became the actual potentate of the country. At first he was a "republican," an ally of liberals and a friend of the people. But once he had succeeded in overthrowing the tottering Kajar dynasty, it did not take him long to complete his Napoleonic course by declaring himself Reza Shah, Emperor of Iran. Seventeen years of absolutism followed. Parliament continued to exist on paper only. Freedom of the press disappeared, and whoever was suspected of liberal ideas was jailed. But the people had already acquired a taste for democracy. They did not give up hope and continued their struggles inside and outside prison.

In the meantime Reza Shah had seen in the rising Hitlerite Germany a better ally than Great Britain, and at the time of the outbreak of war he had quite directly identified himself as an advocate of the Axis cause. Three months after the German attack on the Soviet Union, when demands of the Allied powers for the ousting of German fifth columnists from Iran were rejected by Reza Shah, Anglo-Soviet troops marched in. At the end of three days fighting the demoralized army, which for years had absorbed the lion's share of the government's budget, laid down its arms. The Iranian people welcomed the terms of the armistice, which meant amnesty for tens of thousands of political prisoners and freedom of the press.

It was a hard time for the Allied powers. German armies were swiftly advancing toward Moscow. The British authorities offered extremely limited support to the newly-formed Tude (Masses) Party, which had as its nucleus the Communist and liberal leaders who had recently emerged from jail. The Tude Party invited into its ranks all those who agreed with its immediate program of fighting fascism, punishment of those responsible for the excesses under the rule of Reza Shah, restitution of property confiscated by him, and elementary democratic rights such as freedom of the press. The Tude Party also exerted great efforts in organizing trade unions.

BUT the honeymoon of the British with the progressive cause in Iran was short-lived. No sooner had the tide of the European war been changed by the Soviet victory at Stalingrad than the Colonial Office men, who formed the staff of the British Embassy in Teheran, decided that cooperation with the progressive elements was no longer necessary.

From the close of 1942 on, the British developed a systematic anti-Tude policy. This policy is carried out in different ways. They back the "Fifty Families" of Iranian nobility who collaborated with Reza Shah and who support the king. This group controls all the high bureaucratic posts of the country and supports the young Shah. But the nobility is too degenerate and its non-religious tendencies do not fit into the general scheme of Great Britain for the future of the Middle East. That is why, near the end of 1942, the British brought back to Iran a figure who had been absent from the Iranian political scene for twenty years. This man is Seyid Zia, whose reactionary attitude was too much for even a man like Reza Shah to endure. I had an interview with him in Palestine a few months before he was taken back to Iran by the British, in the course of which he told me that he thought his great mistake during his 100-day premiership was that he did not exterminate all his opponents.

After his return, Seyid advocated the merger of religion with the state, the wearing of veils by women, breaking up of trade unions and, most important of all, he started to fight the Tude Party. The people, along with the enlightened clergy, shied away from him.

But a new and powerful political-economic group was soon created, with Seyid at its center. The newly-formed industrialist class and the businessmen who had enriched themselves by speculation during Reza Shah's reign and after the Allied occupation, joined him and poured millions of dollars into his lap. A young speculator, whose dossier for embezzlement still gathers dust in the Ministry of Justice, bought him a million-dollar mansion. A textile industrialist contributed 10,000 blankets when he decided to outstrip the Tude Party's winter clothing campaign. In

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Handelsman.

Over the Top.

short, all the big fellows pitched in to sell Seyid to the people.

The political machine with which to fight the Tude Party was furnished by the British authorities. When the time for new elections came, they saw to it that in the Southern Provinces (British zone of occupation) only Seyid men were "elected." Here it is significant to remember that the British authorities prevented many former representatives with anti-Seyid tendencies from reaching their constituencies for the election campaign. One of these candidates, a journalist from Khorramshahr, not only was denied the right to reach his constituency, but when he planned a trip to the United States a few months ago he was refused a visa by the British.

In this way the British authorities managed to secure for Seyid a majority in the Parliament from the thinly populated Southern Provinces which, according to the ridiculous existing "proportionate" quotas, can elect two-and-a-half times more representatives than the number of their population would justify. The southern deputies, who did not have a hard time electing themselves, arrived at the capital early and did not wait for all the northern representatives to come in order to open the new session. They went so far as to use their votes to oust from the house some of the elected representatives of the North.

IN THE fight against Tude, the government and the Seyid clique worked hand in hand. Seyid outvoted it in the Parliament. The government put a ban on its papers as often as it could, broke up its demonstrations, used police and armed forces against trade unions attached to it. From this point of view the attitude of recent Greek reactionary governments would serve as a good example.

One of Seyid Zia's tactics was to support the company unions, using every kind of corruption and intrigue to make these unions work. Foremost among his tactics, however, was gangsterism. His henchmen managed, with the support of police, to tear down and set fire to the building of the Tude Party headquarters in the industrial city of Ispahan and committed hundreds of other acts of vandalism.

The people have been quick to identify Seyid with British imperialism. Tude grows in strength. Its program of land reforms, its insistence upon finishing the job of the constitutional revolution of fifty years ago, its struggle to put an end to feudalism, its unceasing efforts to expose every abuse of the corrupt nobility which controls the government, appeals to the people. Its membership grows daily, and its press has won the largest circulation, leaving the *Ra'de-Emruz*, Seyid Zia's paper, far behind.

By the end of 1944 it was obvious to every one that Tude had emerged as the strongest political body in both the northern and the southern parts of Iran. On the other hand, the war was nearing its end in Europe; and in the coming elections, in the absence of foreign intervention, the Tude was sure to win a great majority. As the old nobility and its corrupt, inefficient bureaucratic machine could not be entrusted with the job of fighting such a young and vigorous force as Tude, reaction prepared to stage a *coup d'etat* if that became necessary. For this purpose British authorities worked among the Ilat (nomad tribes) of the South. As I mentioned above, they have been arming and training the Ghashghai and Balutch Tribes for almost a year. In the case of a successful *coup d'etat*, Seyid, who nurtures a strong animosity toward the nobility and the young Shah, will certainly do without them. The latter group is well aware of Seyid's intentions. On the other hand, to them Seyid is only a lesser evil, the first being an aroused people. That is why they contribute in the present smear campaign against Tude and the Democratic Party of Azerbaijan.

As for the accusations against the Democratic Party of Azerbaijan concerning its "separatist," "Communistic," "rebellious" tendencies and actions, these were exposed when the National Congress of Azerbaijan published a declaration announcing that what it wanted was the establishment of an autonomous government in Azerbaijan within the framework of the Iranian state. The declaration refuted all the

(*Continued on page* 19)

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TRAITOR OR HOLY IDIOT?

The Case of Ezra Pound, by Isidor Schneider

THE scene is a Washington courtroom, where Ezra Pound is being arraigned for treason—for treason, gentlemen, not for poetry. Pound's lawyer, a Mr. Cornell, takes full advantage of the bourgeois prejudice against the poet as holy idiot. He speaks of his client's "senile eccentricity into which he has been going for a long time—or perhaps we could use a stronger word. His correspondence, very voluminous, shows that he is reaching insanity common to genius." . . .

The scene is a Nuremberg courtroom, where high Nazi criminals are on trial. The financier, Hjalmar Schacht, who manipulated the sinews of Hitler's war, is among the defendants. His defense is that "business is business." Poetry is beyond reason; and business is beyond morals. No war criminal is responsible! . . .

November 25, 1945. In that day's issue of the American newspaper *PM*, five American poets and an American critic pre-indorse Pound's holy-idiot defense. The poet Charles Norman, who has assembled their statements for the newspaper, is obviously embarrassed. He finds it necessary to write, "In fairness to all it should be pointed out that the excerpts from Pound's broadcasts were not seen by them."

The five poets are E. E. Cummings, William Carlos Williams, Conrad Aiken and Karl Shapiro; the critic is F. O. Matthiessen.

E. E. Cummings holds that "every artist's strictly illimitable country is himself," and therefore Pound did not betray.

William Carlos Williams condemns Pound but considers him harmless and holds some of our big newspapers to be more dangerous.

Louis Untermeyer not only does not dissociate poet from traitor but evades the issue by emphasizing that Pound *was* a poet, implying that if Pound were *still* a poet he might have a different attitude toward his treason.

Conrad Aiken considers Pound less traitor than fool and his opinions "political infatuations or obsessions." But no less can be said of Hitler and the defendants at Nuremberg. Would Aiken therefore absolve them?

As for Matthiessen, it is difficult to judge his position. He writes: "If you believe in the artist's responsibility for his views I don't see how you can explain Pound's away." And proceeds to explain them away in the following lines: "But he is a tragic instance of the consequence resulting from the gulf between poet and audience, which has been symptomatic of recent social disequilibrium. Living for so many years as an isolated expatriate in Rapallo, Pound was so cut off from any normal contacts with society that when he began to develop a political and social theory it could only be eccentric. As an eccentric he must now be judged."

I have separated Karl Shapiro's comment from the rest, who are at least indirect and obviously uncomfortable in their defense of Pound. Such as it is their defense stands on the theory of the artist as the irresponsible, as holy idiot. But Shapiro's defense is jauntily, flippantly direct. He even paints Pound as a man of unique intellectual integrity. Pound's crime for him was merely "not reversing his beliefs after Mussolini came to blows with Jefferson." And he asks, "If there is any principle involved I should like to know what it is." Considering the moral blindness which this reveals, it is not likely that Mr. Shapiro would recognize a principle even if history took still more trouble to show him one.

These six statements indicate with depressing relevance one of the costs of the Dies gestapo and the Rapp-Coudert inquisition, those foetal forms of American fascism, and the shouldering out from all but the small left-wing press of any Marxist thinking. The dignity and the responsibility of the artist, for which the best minds of the country have struggled and which was almost won in the thirties, is uneasily yielded here for the immunity of the holy idiot.

I ASK these six: Is it tenderness toward artists that you feel? Then in the name of that tenderness how can you condone one who betrayed art to its executioners, who served the book burners, the hangmen of the intellects, the destroyers who planned and nearly carried out the murders of entire cultures?

Remember, you tender-minded, the fascist firing squad that slaughtered Garcia Lorca, the Nazi sadists who murdered von Ossietsky and Bertold Jacob in prison camps, who gassed Georg Hermann and Adam Kuckhoff in Oswiecim, who hounded Walter Hasenclever, Ernst Toller, Stefan Zweig, Egon Fridell and as yet uncounted others to suicide, and who withered so many talents in the desert of exile! Remember the hostage killers who shot Benjamin Cremieux and Gabriel Peri; the scientific savages who exterminated, not by individual names but by categories, the intellectuals of the Slav peoples and the Baltic states; the organizers of the holocaust that began in Spain and has not yet ended; in which Christopher Caudwell, Richard Cornford, Ralph Fox, Ehrich Muhsam, and later the young Russian Yuri Krimov, finishing his second novel and the young American Seymour Keidan, preparing his first book of lyrics, had their promising lives blotted out and their good and perhaps great writing lost to the world!

Have you no concern for the new generation of artists perverted in the fascist lands and those killed who did not pervert easily? Have you no fears for the coming generation of artists menaced by every escaped fascist criminal? Do you enjoy the company you find yourselves in, the wire-pullers, the winking big-shots, the double-dealers of all dimensions, the Peglers and O'Donnells whose hands brush yours as they, too, reach out in aid of their favored war criminals? Will the future generations of artists thank you for leaving fear and the holy idiot as their heritage?

I ask these questions because I do not believe that our writers and critics are really so soft-headed. I ask for other expressions of opinion from American artists and critics. And I ask the six who wrote the *PM* statement: After reading the excerpts from Pound's broadcasts do you want to let those statements stand?

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MATTER OF FACT . . . by LEWIS MERRILL

LABOR AND A PEOPLE'S ART

THE responsibility of organized labor in helping to develop a people's culture has finally emerged out of the cocktail stage of discussion. Particularly under the encouragement of PAC, interesting beginnings have been made in the use of pamphlets, movies, the theater, paintings and other art forms. But for the life of me, I can't see that they are leading anywhere.

I'm encouraged to put my two cents in not because I know anything about the question but because I think the time has come to do something about it. I know so little about it that I am likely very wrong in major respects, in which case I would like to know where I am wrong and what is right. And it seems to me also that NEW MASSES has a natural leadership to exercise here and that a consistent reader should know what is wanted even if it is not yet known how it is to be done.

All of us active in the labor movement are pretty much alive to the dangers in labor's present fight, which actually is a fight for the full use of the productive resources of American industry to bring about an expanded standard of living. Perhaps the chief danger is the difficulty labor encounters in fully mobilizing and informing the people not only of its purposes but the nature of their adversaries and how labor proposes to overcome the people's enemies.

Win, lose or draw in the present wage struggle, it is quite clear that in the days that lie ahead labor is going to be in a consistent and constantly broadening fight. If there are dangers in its position today, these are not going to abate. Its very victories produce dangers because its victories lead to extending the fight and not bringing it to a close, since reaction never accepts a people's victory as final. So labor is going to need help and plenty of it.

Meanwhile, in every city and in every field, the cultural workers are anxious and ready to do what they can in bringing about a progressive America. During the last presidential election, the cultural workers demonstrated very vividly how helpful they can be. Because of their popular following, the normal exercise of their citizenship rights became an asset to the Roosevelt forces. That they continue to be alert to changing developments is encouraging. But in the long-term fight, it seems to me that cultural workers will be most helpful by what they do in making their own art responsive to the people's needs. If they don't do so, their art cannot develop and their own talents will be narrowed.

If a genuine people's art is to be created, then it seems to me it cannot be bumbled. Genuine boldness and scope are required. Making a movie here and there for a union, or holding an art exhibit in a union hall, is not going to do the job. These are good, I know, and come about usually because individuals get tired of just talking and want to get something done.

The whole idea seems to be that if there is to be a people's cultural movement it will come about through the labor unions' financing it. The most a given union can do is to provide a satisfactory "educational" program for its own members and the instances where this is being done are few indeed. No, it seems to me that the financing of such a program is beyond labor's strength at the moment, and we'll wait a long time for a people's culture if the finances of the labor movement are to provide it.

What labor can do is to provide a guaranteed audience, if not in every community, then certainly in all the major ones. Then cultural projects directed to the community-at-large would be insured basic operating costs. Thus labor's present strength, properly used, could sustain not only a people's cultural movement but could exercise an immediate influence on the commercial radio, movies and other mass "art" forms. To organize the guaranteed audiences would cost far less than one of the dinky "labor" movies that are being produced. What remains to be found then would be working capital to start the cultural productions going. From what I hear, if the audience can be guaranteed, the capital can be found pretty easily because it would not take enormous sums of money.

BUT it is equally clear to me that if the will is absent, in or out of labor, it is because there has been an absence of leadership in thinking the problem through. A leaf could be borrowed from the book of the atomic scientists. They not only know what they have, they know what they want done with it. Because of that fact, their initiative both here and in Great Britain has made it possible for organized labor to come to their aid and join them in the fight for a people's science; not only, that is, for proper control of the atomic bomb but for a science that will serve the people.

It is the absence of leadership in this respect that continues the artificial gulf between the professional and amateur in the cultural field. I have some ideas on the phase too, but essentially it seems to me it is the product of schematism, of the absence of a unifying body of ideas. I don't know what happened to the Writers' Congress and the Artists' Congress, but the beginnings were there of the kind of approach I have in mind. The biggest differences between those days and now is the fact that the labor movement has grown from 3,000,000 to 15,000,000 and is able and willing to do more today than yesterday. This is a fact of enormous importance to the whole of America, and does not exclude the cultural workers, by whom I mean the writers, the actors, the painters, the musicians and all other such, amateur and professional.

This is the way it seems to me. Maybe I'm all wrong. But one thing I'm positive I'm right about: that the time has come to get our ideas sorted out and do something about a people's culture.

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REALISM AND THE SOVIET NOVEL

By HOWARD FAST

BRAND WHITLOCK once said that fiction at its best can come nearer to reality than the truth itself. And in spite of the seeming contradiction, this statement might be used as a key to any discussion of realism and the novel.

The novel itself is another discussion, and a very long one at that. We are concerned here primarily with the problem of reality which faces both the writer and the reader in terms of this specific prose form. Reality as such, or the world we live in, the many thousands of objects and forces which affect us—these can never be contained within a literary work in their entirety. For example, if a writer—even the most thorough of the naturalistic school—were to attempt to follow a human being through a single day of his life, he would be utterly confounded. Ten thousand pages would scarcely do for such an attempt. Even aften ten thousand pages, could one have caught all the smells, the half-lost thoughts that begin and have no ending; the sounds that have no description? No. To put reality into words as it exists is impossible. And, though we know it is impossible, and though we are ready to smile at the conception of such a literary endeavor, we must nevertheless constantly refresh that point of view—for, unless it is understood that every writer, however naturalistic he pretends to be, indulges in a fine process of selection, we can neither discuss nor begin to understand the relationship between realism and the novel.

At this point we can talk of the literary work as being selective, as being a very specific and narrow reflection of the world itself. It is entirely valid to say that a writer writes the truth; but it is not valid if, along with that statement, does not go an understanding of the fact that the truth as one man sees it is not the truth as another man sees it.

THE serious American writer has this in common with the serious Soviet writer: they both seek the truth. They both attempt to reproduce within the pages of their novel a valid reflection of the society they inhabit. They do this by dramatic selection—that is, their approach is dialectic. If the approach of a writer—that is, a novelist—is anything but dialectic, his work will be completely stagnant, holding neither interest nor validity for the reader. But the difference between the American writer and the Soviet writer is that whereas one, the American writer, sees the world through a romanticized dialectics, the other, the Soviet writer, sees the world through the realistic logic of dialectical materialism. This becomes plainer when we approach it empirically, as I propose to do.

I have shown that the exact reproduction of reality in literature is impossible. I also stated at the outset of this discussion that I agreed with the concept that fiction at its best could come closer to the truth than such reality. This is neither as contradictory nor as involved as it seems. Around us is an intensely complicated world. It is a world that superficially very often makes for neither sense nor reason—and for some people this world of ours is so bewildering and so frightening that they retreat into evasions. Events in this world share the same complexity—and for that reason so many of us welcome the aid of a specialist in events, of a specialist in politics, of a specialist in science. The novelist at his best is a specialist too. His specialty is the role of the individual. He takes a single person and the prime forces that move this person, that motivate him, he takes what is best in him and what is worst in him, and he sends this person forth on a series of adventures in our very complex world. And when the novelist is finished—if he is worth his salt—the reader not only knows his protagonist but also knows the forces of society which moved his protagonist and which, in certain cases, were set in motion by the same protagonist.

In other words, the novelist selects from reality what is most important and reflects it dialectically. He deals with both the subjective and the objective—and thereby he presents to his reader a clear silhouette of one or several human beings who emerge from confusion.

Take, for example, Theodore Dreiser's *American Tragedy*, one of the superb novels of our times. Dreiser takes a character essentially weak and allows the main forces of petty bourgeois society in America to act upon this character. Subjectively and objectively he paints the character's reaction in turn and when the reader has finished the book—if the reader is a part of this layer of society—he discovers that he has a more real and a more illuminating picture of his own life, his own society, than he was formerly able to comprehend from the society itself.

I think at this point we can see that the dichotomy of realism and fiction is solved by selection. I think we can also see that the writer can best solve this dichotomy who is best equipped with an understanding of society. In other words, the reality exists for all human beings, but the reality can be translated into truth or falsity only by means of a philosophy.

LET me give an example of this. The reality of a strike is present for any who care to observe. The objective factors are the same to anyone who cares to observe the picket line, the locked gates, the company guards, etc. For the writer who sympathizes with labor, the reality is a courageous and noble effort on the part of workingmen to obtain their rights and to exist as human beings. To the anti-labor writer, the workingmen are perpetrating a crime against society. To the neutral writer, the workingmen are fighting for laudable motives, but so are the employers, and one could go on and on, into endless variants of these positions.

But we approach the question, which of these several realities is *the* reality? In other words, one of these concepts must be correct, and the rest false. If we reason scientifically, we know that such is the case. For example, primitive man, seeing trees bend as the wind blew, deduced that the motion of the trees caused the wind. But we, armed with scientific knowledge and observation, know that the reverse is true—that the motion of the air causes the motion of the trees.

Therefore we come to this proposition: is there a science through which society may be understood, through which the actions of man in relation to his environment may be understood in the same terms that the action of an acid on a metal is understood? If one does not believe that there is such a science, but contends that all of human life and human society is anarchistic and hap-

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hazard and meaningless, then this discussion would have to come to a sudden end. If one does believe that there is such a science, and that, through this science, the key to reality may be obtained, then we can ask, who is best armed with that science?

SINCE he is armed with that science, dialectical materialism, I believe that the Soviet writer is armed far better than we are with the tools of an understanding of society. To go back to our reference to the strike, the Soviet writer would see the strike as an effort on the part of labor to advance the cause of mankind. In our country, this might well be debated and debated very furiously. But for one who believes in the cause of labor all other interpretations of this struggle would be not truth but falsehood.

A writer who wishes to tell the truth about the working class in America has to think several times before beginning to write—providing that he is armed with the ability to reflect the truth. Then he has to labor through a welter of contradictions. If he believes in democracy he must attempt to bring forth that democracy within the framework of an imperialistic nation. If he believes in labor, he must be prepared not merely to write as an honest writer but to face the abuse and scorn of the press who will immediately denounce him as a Communist. If he should believe that he has so clear an understanding of society as to be able to choose the truthful reflection of reality then the critics will attack him as being one-sided, as presenting a biased point of view.

One could go on and on with this, point to case after case where almost unassailable walls are built about the American writer. And from this results the almost hopeless confusion in serious American writing, the disillusionment, the inability to see either hope or method. Also from this results the decline in our literature which we are observing today; for, finding the treatment of reality a heart-breaking and almost impossible task, writer after writer here in America is turning to one form or another of escape literature—the mystery book, the tough guy *a la* Chandler, the huge historical novel, the thin, childlike anti-humanism of Steinbeck and Huxley.

In contrast to these evasions of reality are the novels from the Soviet Union, which present human beings who believe in life, who fight and love and work with hope and directness seldom matched in our American literature. The Soviet hero believes in life. He believes in the ability of the individual to conquer his environment. He believes in the ability of the Soviet citizen to conquer his enemies. The war writers of the Soviet Union — Ehrenburg, Grossman, Simonov, Wasilewska and a dozen others—have painted unforgettable pictures of men in battle; but more than this, they have achieved an amazing reality in terms of warfare, and in their tales, to put it vulgarly, we fairly smell the smoke—whereas our own writers approach battle and shy away for the most part from the dialectic core of the struggle, the fact of how men kill and why they kill.

Curiously, the charge most often hurled against the Soviet novel is that it is a departure from reality, the conditioned work of an artist in uniform. Many honest observers in America have offered that opinion, and it is well to understand from where it stems. We in a confused and contradictory society have come to a point where we refuse to accept reality except in terms of confusion.

So long have we been conditioned to frustration as an integral part of the novel that we ourselves demand frustration as a literary condiment. Our critics object to Ilya Ehrenburg analyzing in his *Fall of Paris* the forces which brought about the first defeat of France; for these same critics are so far from reality that they refuse to believe that such forces can be either analyzed or interpreted by a writer. Our critics objected to the horror of *The Rainbow* chiefly because our own writers have never honestly and objectively faced the fact of fascism and attempted to portray it. Ostrowsky's *Making of a Hero*, one of the great Soviet novels of our time, was attacked in this country as an unthinking propaganda statement because, once again, our critics were unable to cope with a writer who believed so fervently in his own country and his own people.

Reality exists for the writers of all countries, but the writer must come to reality armed with a philosophy that will give him understanding. The Russian writer has this philosophy in dialectical materialism. He believes that men are motivated by forces and he also believes that men can shape these forces. He believes in hope rather than hopelessness, in direction rather than confusion, and most basically, also, he believes in mankind. Thereby he can create heroes to fight within a framework of humanism and extract from the endless richness and complexity of life those basic and real factors which enable man to understand his world and to advance it.

I KNOW of no better way to illustrate this thesis than to examine the current best-seller by Simonov, *Days and Nights*.

Here is a book which, to my mind, has caught more of the reality and the horror and the terror of modern warfare than any other I have read out of the current struggle. As you read the book you live and suffer in Stalingrad. So close is your identification with the hero Saburov, with the men who fight under him, with the city, and with the whole of the Russian people, that you react with the fullest understanding of their emotions, their motives and their courage.

Reading it you cannot doubt that Simonov has distilled from the grim reality of warfare both understanding and truth. In other words, he saw clearly what went on in Stalingrad in terms of men, of motives, and of the greater forces concerned; and he was able to impart this understanding to his readers. Withal, the book glows with such compassion as one finds in almost no American war writing. You get that curious counterpointed effect of extreme and humane gentleness along with the fierce savagery with which the Russian soldier defended his native soil. This, too, is the reality. Within man is the potential for immense compassion as well as immense hatred; and to bring out both these emotions, and all that flows between them, requires, as I have said before, a most comprehensive philosophic understanding of human beings and of the society which human beings inhabit.

Certainly one does not find in Simonov that technical excellence, that almost decadent worship of craft for craft's sake, that one can discover by turning up at random almost any page of the *New Yorker*, or the *Saturday Review of Literature*, or the *Times Book Review* magazine. The task of the mature writer is to reflect reality, to understand it and to arrange it in terms of a human being, an individual. I do not say that technical excellence is not to be desired. But far more important than technical excellence is the content of the material, and only through an understanding of the world can content mature.

I was amused to find the publishers of *Days and Nights*, as well as the Book-of-the-Month Club, claiming that this

(*Continued on page 25*)

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YOU ARE ON THE PICKET LINE, TOO

By THE EDITORS

As WE go to press, President Truman has lined up with the corporations against organized labor in the current wage disputes. He has proposed legislation which embodies the gist of the Ball-Barton-Hatch bill, which labor unanimously and bitterly opposed. The President's idea is to clamp on labor a sweeping version of the Railway Labor Act, which in its eighteen years of operation has depressed the conditions of American railwaymen below that of other basic industries, because, in practice, the Railway Labor Act has become compulsory arbitration.

A good guage to the President's proposals is the unanimous labor opposition it has already evoked; and the prompt support it received from the open-shop crowd in Congress. Through such proposals, the Chief Executive himself has invited the passage of other anti-labor bills reaction has prepared in Congress.

The President has also urged the striking auto workers to return to work, thus revealing his intention of playing hand-in-glove with General Motors.

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THE declaration of J. D. Harbaugh, manager of Chevrolet, last week threw a flood of light upon the mentality of big business. Accused by union officials of attempting to stir up racial strife in his plants, he denied the charges. But when he was further accused of pitting worker against worker, he blurted out: "*That's right. We are going to continue pitting workmen against workmen. . . . I have made it a practice and I intend to make it a practice as long as I live, of preying on human weaknesses.*" Swept away by his surge of frankness, he continued: "If I have the best ammunition then I win, if you have the best ammunition then you win." There you have it, summed up neatly, with an irreducible minimum of GM's customary polish: the law of tooth and fang.

We regret that this statement is not blazoned in every newspaper, transmitted from every radio. It would reveal the thinking that leads to the

Forces Joined

Ford Motors Stoppage Will Aid General Motors in Its Union Conflict

By RALPH HENDERSHOT,
Financial Editor.

Dispatches from Detroit state that the Ford Motor Co. will close most of its plants tonight. The reason given for the expected stoppage was strikes at 14 factories supplying parts. The chances are, however, that the strikes at General Motors also had something to do with it.

Union leaders have made it plain that their strategy in the automotive industry is to close down the plants of one big company at a time. This is expected to force compliance with their demands for higher wages, the assumption being that struck companies would be at such a disadvantage with their competitors that they would fall in line.

Ralph Hendershot

But these union heads are being a bit naive in thinking that such a procedure would be accepted by the automobile managements without a struggle. Since it is an industry-wide union with which they must contend, it is reasonable to suppose that the managers will fight it from an industry-wide standpoint.

* * *

Will Use Good Judgment.

These managers are much too smart, however, to run afoul of the Federal Trade Commission or the Sherman antitrust laws. They will act independently, to be sure, and there is unlikely to be any evidence which would suggest restraint of trade. The underlying motive which prompts their acts, however, may well be preservation of the industry.

We have no idea how many strikes are now in progress among the automobile suppliers. The chances are, however, that the figure of 14 given by the Ford people is accurate. And it may be that, as is suggested, the company cannot continue to turn out automobiles. We have a feeling, though, that the Ford management would not strain itself too hard to keep rolling in view of the strike at General Motors.

It is reasonable to suppose, too, that other automobile manufacturers will "discover" that they cannot operate in view of supplier strikes. They realize their turn for a strike will come sooner or later and that any advantage they gain now will be lost later when the heat is turned on them. Their best bet, therefore, is to fight the union with its own weapons.

* * *

The above column is from the November 27 issue of the *World-Telegram* in New York. We reproduce it because we believe it is one of the most crassly revealing statements yet published by a spokesman for big business. The corporations, it says, "are too smart" to violate the letter of the Sherman anti-trust laws. But in actuality, it confesses they will violate the spirit, the sense, the reality of those laws, in the campaign to smash labor. An expression such as this emphasizes all the more why every NM reader must become an active champion of the striker's interest. You, too, are on the picket lines.

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"unbelievable arrogance" of General Motors' president, as the union termed it, who would deign to meet the President of the United States, but if "Mr. Warren, the government conciliator, asked me to come down to see him, well, I have quite a few things to do, see." Contrast this with the union's position. The union "is prepared to meet at any time, at any place, to reach an early and fair settlement."

In brief, NEW MASSES feels it imperative that the public become involved in the strike, consciously and in a constructive manner. It actually is, but the people must become aware of their stake; that they have as much to lose as the GM worker on the picket line. Last week we indicated the stakes: a thirty percent wage increase that is the minimum requirement for maintaining our national purchasing power and preventing the grinding down of our economy to a depression that would make 1929 look like a Sunday School picnic, as an economist recently put it.

This week we want to continue underscoring the need for public, for consumer action.

General Motors has been wooing the public with an advertising campaign that involved millions of dollars (rest assured such sentiments as those expressed by the Chevrolet official were omitted). It is necessary that every citizen study labor's side, his side, and actively champion nationwide, community support of the strikers. This connotes a counter-educational and advertising campaign, an initiative that would carry the truth to every organization in the community—social, civic, religious, veteran, interracial, business and so on. Should the GM strikers be defeated, if they are obliged to make major concessions, then the millions of unionists now considering wage demands—the 700,000 steel workers, the 300,000 in radio, the 600,000 coal miners, the 1,400,000 railroadmen, would face their employers with a major handicap. If the UAW wins, all labor gains a major victory; the public wins, and the base is laid for a strengthened economy redounding to every family's advantage.

The public, as well as labor, must realize that the government, led by the Truman administration, is a weak reed to lean on; that the President's action in breaking the traction strike in Washington and his anti-labor position in the great GM strike are earmarks of his attitude toward labor. The people have only themselves to rely upon; and they can summon up the irresistible pressure that would move the administration's favorable action on labor's behalf, which would redound to the limitless advantage of the entire nation.

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PRESIDENT TRUMAN's report on reconversion is strictly a phony. Here's why.

Unemployment: The President says that "Total employment has now returned to the V-J Day level and is expected to continue to rise." This gives a false picture of negligible unemployment. The facts, however, paint a different picture. In his report immediately after V-J Day, War Mobilization and Reconversion Director John W. Snyder estimated the number of unemployed at the end of the war as 1,100,000. Since then, the President reports, 3,500,000 men and women have been demobilized. Even allowing for those veterans who are not workers and those who may not yet be looking for jobs, it is clear that if employment is today at the V-J Day level, then unemployment must be close to 4,000,000—perhaps more.

Reconversion: The President says that "The job of reconverting our plants from war to peace is virtually completed." He tries to pass this off as a great achievement. But Snyder's August 15 report stated that "While most plant reconversion can be accomplished within a few months, *at least twelve to eighteen months may be required to reach the expanded peacetime economy which is needed for full employment.*"

Production: According to Truman, "Most peacetime products are already in production or ready to roll." Again the picture is false. The President knows that large sections of big business are on a sitdown strike against our national well-being, some holding up production, others holding up sales. In four months our largest production unit, the automobile industry, turned out only some 19,000 cars, only about one-fourth of what had been scheduled. Radios, refrigerators and other consumers' items are being kept off the market in order to force the jacking up of OPA ceilings and to cash in on the elimination of the excess profits tax in 1946.

Stabilization: Truman cites a 0.3 percent decline in living costs since the Japanese surrender. He plays down the trend toward inflationary increases now gathering momentum. He does not mention that the elimination of food subsidies, which will be completed by next June 30, has already raised the price of butter six cents a pound and will boost food prices next year by ten to twelve percent, adding a minimum of $2,000,000,000 to the nation's food bill. The President boasts about the rapidity with which wartime controls have been lifted, blithely ignoring the fact that this is the most powerful inflationary factor in our economy. As a result of the removal of controls on building materials, for example, we are headed toward an unchecked real estate inflation.

At the same time the fat cats get fatter. Secretary of Commerce Wallace has submitted a study to the House Appropriations Committee which predicts, on the one hand, 7,000,000 unemployed in 1946, and on the other, corporation profits after taxes twice the pre-war figure. This inflation of profits for the few and deflation of income for the vast majority, if unchecked, can only mean that whatever boom develops will be short and that the crash will be long and deep.

The China Fiasco

THE angry resignation of Patrick J. Hurley as ambassador does not by itself do away with the policy of armed intervention in China. There is no doubt that Hurley as the symbol and the chief executor of this policy was forced out by popular pressure. His departure is to be welcomed—not as a victory over the policy, but as a step along the way.

The article by Frederick V. Field on page 3 was written before Hurley launched his tirade, but the analysis contained in that article is fully borne out by what this combustible Hooverite had to say. Hurley's only complaint was that the policy which President Truman, Secretary Byrnes and General Wedemeyer have so carefully kept over the face of American imperialism in China was not being carried forward with sufficient vigor. And when he referred to "colonial imperialism" as something to which he was opposed, Hurley was referring only to our imperialist competitors, Britain, France and Holland. He objects to their insisting on cutting in on what he considers to be exclusive American domain. He is not interested in freedom for the Indonesians or the Annamese or the Burmese. He wants Washington to take over from the British, French and Dutch, using the latter simply as foremen and subforemen of American imperialism. Apparently Hurley does not feel we are going far enough despite the

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squeeze we are currently giving Britain over credits and trade.

When Hurley refers to "Communist imperialism" he is using the old fascist device of preparing the ground for an attack on the USSR and for continued onslaught against all democratic movements in the colonial and semi-colonial world—in particular, in China.

By his own words Hurley admits that the official American policy in China, which he says was fully supported by Truman and Byrnes, is a direct betrayal of every international arrangement to which the United States is a party. The American government, on paper at least and according to the pious utterances of its leaders, is committed to the maintenance of international peace and security through cooperation with the United Nations and particularly with the Soviet Union and Britain. Hurley, on the other hand, reveals that our policy in the Far East opposes the British and prepares for war on the Soviet Union.

Major credit for touching off Hurley's resignation goes to Congressman Hugh DeLacy and five other West Coast Representatives. DeLacy's brilliant speech on the floor of the House last week and the bill which he and his colleagues have introduced calling for an immediate withdrawal of American armed forces and materials of war from China reflected the overwhelming opinion of the American people. The bill (HR-408) must now be also made the rallying point for changing American policy in China and securing the dismissal of Byrnes from office.

The resignation of the rambunctious Hurley has provided a most favorable time for Americans to make their will for a democratic Far Eastern policy felt. President Truman, the State Department, Representatives and Senators must be bombarded with protests from organizations, individuals, mass meetings and delegations as never before.

How to Get Home

THERE are some several million parents very unhappy over the fact that their sons and daughters have not been shipped back home promptly. Now if the fathers of these GI's and WAC's were generals and could pull a few wires, exert a little pressure in the right places in Washington, their children might be returned in comfort and style. They might do a Hanford MacNider. The MacNider method is to use your rank as a general officer to get the ear of MacArthur in Tokyo. MacArthur cables the head of the Marines in the capital and pronto presto, your boy is zooming home over the Pacific to American shores. It doesn't matter whether your boy has enough points for release. He gets out anyway because papa is a general and MacArthur is papa's friend. If you feel ashamed about using the MacNider method, if you think its a disgraceful thing to do—your boy or girl will have to hang around in Europe or the Far East and rot away until those responsible for demobilization are good and ready to send him or her back.

So you see, being close to the top crust counts for a great deal in this country, and old Tom Jefferson's words about equality are just a lot of hogwash to some people who wear stars on their shoulders and can call MacArthur "Doug." And if you get blazing mad about the whole MacNider incident, there will always be some newspaper to cool you off with more hogwash about the unions interfering with transportation and shipping. They won't, for example, tell you in any detail that ships are being used for trade with Franco's fascists; that a lot of boats are uselessly tied up in a lot of harbors; that Joe Curran of the National Maritime Union listed thirty-five ships that could be used as troop transports, but are instead being used for export of goods; that there are many vessels that could be converted to carrying troops if Washington wanted to do a little quick hammering and fixing. And so it goes. Blame it all on labor, say the big mouths, when the fact of the matter is that if it weren't for the CIO, and the National Maritime Union in particular, the delay in sending soldiers home would be even greater. The NMU has been putting the heat on the War Shipping Administration through demonstrations and protests. And we hope that the CIO will demand that MacNider and MacArthur be publicly censured by the War Department for making a lot of people believe that these two are exempt from ordinary democratic decencies.

In the Gentle South

ON SEPTEMBER 9, 1945, Moses Greene, war veteran, was murdered near Ellenton, S. C. On October 11, Jesse Payne was lynched in Madison, Fla. On October 21, Sam McFadden, also a war veteran, was lynched in Suwanee County, Fla. In the USA, where the pages of the press have for four years self-righteously — and rightfully — blasted the myth of Nazi superiority and exposed the bestialities of the "Master Race," three human beings have been brutally exterminated without the law in six weeks time. This sinister manifestation of a lynch wave in the South, and the revival of the Ku Klux Klan, are ominous signals. America must learn that "deep are the roots" not only of our heritage from the brutality of the slave system, but also of fascism, whose forces are being clandestinely organized for greater and greater assaults everywhere. One black body hanging from a tree casts a shadow not only on the rights of all Negroes, but of all white Americans as well. The assault on the individual right makes easier the assault on common constitutional rights. And America, whose Fifth Column has remained essentially untouched throughout a people's war, should act quickly and decisively.

Those guilty of these shameful lynchings are known to the authorities. To date no action has been taken against them either by state or federal authorities. Failure to prosecute and punish with the full severity of the law will only encourage further wanton murder.

The International Labor Defense has launched a campaign to enforce the federal Civil Right Law in the South. Write or wire Attorney General Tom Clark, Department of Justice, Washington, D. C., demanding that his department put a stop to these lynchings through immediate and full prosecution and punishment under federal law of those responsible for the lynch-deaths of Moses Greene, Jesse Payne and Sam McFadden.

Iranian Tinderbox

(*Continued from page* 12)

charges that it had resorted to the use of arms, saying, "To attain its objective the Congress will use only propaganda." But it warned that any attempt to suppress the struggle of the Azerbaijan would be fought to the bitter end. The program of the Congress included the use of the Azerbaijanian language in schools, administrations and newspapers.

These are the facts. The British are working hand in hand with Iran's anti-Sovieteers and reactionaries to prevent democratic changes in the country. The British Foreign Office, of course, pretends that it is doing otherwise, but not even Mr. Bevin can obscure the British role after what he has permitted to be done in India, Indonesia and Palestine.

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READERS' FORUM

Memo from Paris

TO NEW MASSES: The mail has been coming in beautifully lately. Only four or five days from New York to Paris. NM reaches me every week on Monday.

I met one of the editors of *Les Lettres Francaises*, who is inviting me to his home some evening to meet his family. The editor in question is Loys Masson, a young French poet who probably is not yet known much outside of France. I gave him five back copies of NM, and you should have seen his eyes shine with gladness.

At this time the French political situation is in full crisis. I hate to use the word exciting (it suggests that I am only a spectator—and yet, not being a Frenchman, that is really all that I am). I am walking around on edge these days, with my fingers crossed and holding my breath. I marvel at the singleness of purpose and the skill of the French Communists in avoiding all the traps, little and big, that are being laid for them. The opposition admires and condemns the skillful maneuvres of the Communists. What a lie! It is *they* who make all the maneuvres. The Communists are so honest and straightforward, so devoted to their promises to the people.

Friday night I was in our Day Room when the news came over the radio. There were some forty men in the room to hear the story of 300 CIO leaders demonstrating in New York for the return of the GI's. They mentioned also about millions of petitions being circulated. I looked around the room. Everybody was beaming happily. "Hmm, the CIO!" I heard one man near me comment. The story wasn't played up as big as it might have been in *Stars and Stripes*. But it was on the first page, so I guess most everybody saw it.

Your Soviet anniversary issue was a honey. Sparkling with interest and punch. I enjoyed every single item. James Allen's article reminded be of Palme Dutt's cables from London in 1940.

The article from the Chinese Communists in the November *Political Affairs* called my attention to one weakness we still have in America. It seems to me we lack the devotion, the warm love for the people that the Chinese, French and Russian Communists have. All our literature is so coldly intellectual. Perhaps it is impossible for that sense of communion with the masses to develop fully without a mass movement. When the people don't fully trust us, it is very hard not to become just a trifle impatient. When I compare French workers with American workers, I have to fight to suppress a feeling of contempt for my fellow countrymen. Am I the only one with that reaction, or are most of us that way? What I have in mind is nothing I can put my finger on. Everything we say is scrupulously correct. It is rather what we don't say, a certain warmth that is missing.

The way my thoughts run today, it is inevitable that I come back to the French situation before closing. I am sure, I sense it, that the leaders of the Socialist Party are just looking for an excuse to form a government exclusive of the Communists. Just one little mistake would give them that excuse. Without that excuse they wouldn't dare. It would be suicide for their party. And as much as Leon Blum likes capitalism, I have a hunch he likes his political career even more. No wonder the present moment is so tense, so delicate.

Paris. PFC. ROBERT CARLETON.

Fascism's First Fighters

TO NEW MASSES: France faces another winter like the last which was the worst in its history. The problem of clothing, food, fuel and shelter will again be very acute for the French.

But it will be even worse for the 150,000 Spanish Republican refugees in France. They have known little except undernourishment, privation and war since 1936. Their physical condition after three years of civil war in Spain and five years of concentration camps and imprisonment in France is far below normal. The mortality rate among the Spaniards this winter may well be higher than last due to their weakened resistance, unless help is immediately forthcoming.

We are extending our clothing collection drive through December. Warm clothing for these men, women and children, who are exiled from their native land, is essential for their survival. The Unitarian Service Committee will distribute in France all clothing we send there.

Clothing may be sent or delivered to the Spanish Refugee Appeal warehouse, 715 Second Avenue, New York City.

The assistance of your readers to this drive can help to save human lives—the lives of people who have consistently fought for democracy—and of their children, who are the hope of democracy in Spain.

DOROTHY PARKER,
Acting Chairman, Spanish Refugee Appeal.
New York.

More on Psychoanalysis

TO NEW MASSES: The Wortis article on psychoanalysis [NM, Oct. 2 and 9] was a very clear and sensible piece. The field of psychiatry has for too long been oriented away from the world of actuality. Analysts have become Sherlock Holmish types of characters—tiptoeing about a person's mind and ferreting out whatever material they think important. They have accepted a fairly rigid structural approach—things neatly ticketed as the conscious, unconscious, libido, repression, projection, etc. They have emphasized solely the psychic processes and in many instances lost sight of the social character of human beings. . . . Work is not the mere satisfaction of desire but is basically a characteristic of human existence—that is to say, a social characteristic.

The world really exists and offers a variety of interests for the people in it, but to too many Freudians the world exists merely to satisfy drives. It is a sort of shadow world insofar as the individual is concerned. Analysis is caught up too much in narcissistic conceptions.

People are not only interested in their own existence, in their own self-preservation but they have an interest in the world and in the way it functions. The analysts for the most part ignore the qualitative effects of the influence of a culture upon the individual's personality. Pieces like the one by Wortis are good material to assist in chasing the spectres haunting the field of analysis which prohibit it from dealing with the real world.

One other point . . . I know Marxists often consider themselves Freudians. It seems to me that the two are completely incompatible inasmuch as the Marxists stress a materialistic approach and emphasize the effect of a culture upon the individual, whereas the Freudians virtually deny the existence of the culture. It should be remembered that Freudian concepts after all grew out of primarily bourgeois cultural backgrounds and so would be subject to the values of that class.

CPL. MARTY SOLOW.
Okmulgee, Okla.

TO NEW MASSES: Having been psychoanalyzed myself, I know that Dr. Wortis' understanding of what the psychoanalytic process is can hardly be considered even elementary. [NM, Oct. 2 and 9.] I thought the articles by J. B. Furst [Oct. 30 and Nov. 6] would give the psychoanalysts a chance to show their side. What a disappointment! Is Dr. Furst a psychoanalyst? He can't be. Psychoanalysts will not accept patients for treatment less than three times per week and treatment is still expensive. The whole article is very jumbled. Dr. Karen Horney and her school are offshoots of the Freudian analysts and these offshoot schools have not yet been proven.

Why don't you get a Freudian analyst to write for NEW MASSES since the question pertains to their theories? All Freudian analysts are members of the New York Psy-

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choanalytic Institute. I suggest you contact them for some real clarification. Your present run of articles has only added confusion where confusion already exists. When one wants to learn about Communism should he ask a parlor liberal?

You're behind the times on this one.

A SUBSCRIBER.

New York.

TO NEW MASSES: I particularly enjoyed Dr. Furst's articles [NM, October 30 and November 6] on psychoanalysis—was sorry to have missed the first two which stirred so much controversial response. Now, I think, an article on the development in this particular field in the Soviet Union would be most interesting. There has not been too much information on the subject available and it should be worthwhile finding out just what progress they have made in this young and urgent science.

M. D.

Philadelphia.

To Alexander Bergman

TO NEW MASSES: I read in NM of last January 16 a review of Alex Bergman's posthumously published book, *They Look Like Men*. To the few of us left who knew him, or knew of him, it is a heart-warming thing to know that his poetry, his courage, his intelligence, his love were not buried with him.

This poem is written in memory of Alex Bergman. To some of us he gave hope—and hope so often brings life.

Who are you lying here?
What skills, what hopes,
what life-prepared identities
preceded the gray
anonymity of death?
(One of us was young
and bore his pain
more bravely than did I.
One of us was brave
and sang of truth
before he came to die.)
What dream appeared?
What ideology sustains
that through these leaden walls of doom
brave anthems sound, stopped
only by the choking end of breath?
(One of us was old
and said that death
is only for the dead.
One of us was young
and old and brave
and took with him our dread.)

BILL GRIFFIN.

Montefiore Sanatorium,
Bedford Hills, N. Y.

For a Better U. S.

TO NEW MASSES: I appreciate your paper as it tells the truth and that is what I want. I don't want some monopoly-concocted tales to fool me about what is going on. However, I don't always agree with you for I am neither a Communist nor a Socialist, and I am hoping in this puzzled United States we can get some better arrangements out of the present setup.

J. R. ROBINSON,
Robinson Ventilating Co.

Zelienople, Pa.

Young and Faithful

DEAR NEW MASSES: I'm only thirteen years old but I make it a point to read NEW MASSES every week. I think you are doing wonderful work by trying to stop Fascitism from coming to America. We must do our bit to stop fascitism from coming to the U.S. just as our great ally Soviet Russia is doing her bit in Europe. So I say agian keep up the good work.

A faithful reader,

LESTER FREEDLAND.

Brooklyn.

Why We Intervene

(*Continued from page 6*)

forward the world's progressive masses. The war ended in the smashing of the Nazi system, leaving its remnants mostly in western Europe.

Not so in the Far East. Reaction there has far more than a toehold. It is entrenched in Japan. In the colonies it is sufficiently strong to be able to massacre the colonial people. Even the Philippines, the so-called "pride" of America, is being carefully nurtured to serve the purposes of extreme reaction. And in China, pro-fascist forces are strong enough, given substantial American military and economic aid, not to conquer the nation, but to keep it in constant turmoil—at least to prevent it from going democratic.

A gigantic *place d'armes* for reaction, therefore, exists potentially in the Far East. A desperate attempt is being made to form an effective and powerful coalition of reactionary forces—the feudalists and running dogs of imperialism within these nations, the colonial overlords, and the imperialists themselves led by the Americans.

The possibility of this reactionary victory in the Far East came about in a peculiar way. The war against Japan did not go the way of the war against Hitler. The Soviet Union was able to join in the former only at the last minute, and it was carefully planned by the Americans that its coming in would be the last minute no matter what the date. The Mountbatten-British policy killed off whatever chance existed of involving the colonial people in their own liberation. The defeat of the Stilwell policy and the triumph of the Hurley policy decided the issue for China.

To these factors must be added two items the exact weight of which we cannot yet appraise. One was the atomic bomb and the particular timing of its use. The second was the extent to which the Japanese surrender was in a technical sense the result of direct negotiation with representatives of the American government. With regard to the latter we know for a fact that the official OWI Japanese-language broadcasts to the enemy some months before the surrender were openly appealing to the Japanese warlords to give in solely to American forces and before the entrance of the Soviet Union. I refer you to the official messages sent on behalf of our government by naval Captain Zacharias. Whether this appeasement offer was made to the Japanese in other forms and more directly cannot now be said. It is incontrovertible, however, that whether or not the surrender was technically negotiated beforehand, the settlement which followed the surrender under the aegis of MacArthur; the State Department and the White House has taken exactly the form it would have had Byrnes and Hirohito had a pleasant tea together some weeks before.

In any case the result has been a negotiated peace, a peace which constitutes an imperialist deal, a peace negotiated between two parties against a third whom they consider more dangerous to both than they are to each other.

And that is the fourth point and the one which undoubtedly constitutes the major long-term explanation of American intervention in China. By historical definition the principal foe of imperialist reaction is democracy; its principal ally, fascism. The Soviet Union, in the Far East as well as in Europe, is the champion of and most valiant fighter for democracy. In the Far East as well as in Europe, feudalism along with fascism becomes the ally of imperialism. But unlike in Europe, these backward warmongering forces have the possibility of establishing a powerful and extensive base in the Far East. The base is pointed generally at democracy wherever it may try to appear, and specifically at the Soviet Union.

Those are the reasons why American marines, soldiers, sailors and aviators are now being forced to intervene on behalf of Chinese reaction and against Chinese democracy. Neither Hurley nor Wedemeyer nor Byrnes nor the New York *Times* can afford to tell you so because the words are too ugly. Nevertheless, this is the truth which all Americans must realize. It is the situation against which they must rise.

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TWO REGIONAL ANTHOLOGIES

AMERICA IS WEST, an Anthology of Middlewestern Life and Literature, *edited by John T. Flanagan. University of Minnesota Press. $3.75.*

PROMISED LAND: A Collection of Northwest Writing, *edited by Stewart H. Holbrook. Whittlesey House. $3.50.*

JAMES STEVENS, Paul Bunyan's most energetic press agent and a contributor to both these collections, wrote back in 1933 to the editors of *Outlander*, one of the little mimeographed literary magazines burgeoning in such numbers in those days, to express his ironic approval of Regionalism as a safety valve through which young writers could harmlessly blow off steam that might otherwise be used to propagate. ". . . Communism, theology, experiments in Oriental sexology, and similar anti-social rabies." Under the benign influence of Regionalism, Stevens noted, maverick students ". . . repair to the poetical workshop and turn out dainty quatrains and villanelles on Paul Bunyan and One Eye Riley."

University officials, the chronicler of Paul Bunyan went on, being aware of the "social rabies" peril, ". . . have devised a highly effective method of suppuration and prophylaxis. Its agencies are the literary departments. Its sanitary squad is composed of the professors of English and journalism."

John T. Flanagan, a professor of American literature at the University of Minnesota, cannot with complete justice be accused of fostering such monastic seclusion in his hefty anthology. There are a great many good things in it, but the depression and war years are pretty largely ignored. There is the typical academic preoccupation with Indian folklore and the hardships of frontier life. The desperate thirties are too generally represented by ironical or merely pictorial pieces. It would seem that some very acceptable journalistic accounts, at least, might have mirrored some of the fateful ten years preceding the Second World War. William D. Gallagher's short but tedious essay on "Progress in the Northwest" might have been excluded to make room for something more timely.

Professor Flanagan's selections from the past are judicious for the most part, and he has dug up some writers who were too early entombed. Caroline Kirkland and her son Joseph, frontier realists, are represented by two excellent examples of their work. Franz Rickaby's two ballads are praiseworthy contributions to indigenous folklore. Timothy Flint, John S. Robb, Alphonso Wetmore and Edmund Flagg are rescued from comparative obscurity to stand creditably alongside such familiar names as Edward Eggleston, Mark Twain and Hamlin Garland.

STEWART H. HOLBROOK is a man endowed with a robustious sense of humor, and used to entertain readers of the *American Mercury* with picturesque descriptions of the less serious concerns of the lumberjack. His catholicity of taste is indicated in a range of inclusions from the pulps to the atheistic *Truth Seeker*. Sometimes there would seem to be a deliberate perversity, as when he chooses a bit from one of Vardis Fisher's most inconsequential books, *April*, and ignores such others as *Dark Bridwell* and *In Tragic Life*. Yet there is no pallid estheticism about Holbrook's cache of Northwestern literary treasures. The gaudy and exaggerated violence of the tall tale typified by the Paul Bunyan stories pervades much of the material, but there are also some incongruous violets and shrinking antelopes. In the tailpiece of the volume Mr. Holbrook himself characteristically bewails the passing of the old-time lumberjack, a victim of the softening influence of "Comforts, marriage and children, machine logging and highways."

JACK CONROY.

War Provocateur

TROUBLE ZONE, *by Leon Dennen. Ziff-Davis. $1.50.*

IN HIS introduction Mr. Dennen, translator of David Dallin's anti-Soviet works and an anti-Soviet luminary in his own right—on that organ of Social Democratic enlightenment, the *New Leader*—makes some promises. One, to attack the "reign of terror on the part of the Russians," he fills in heaping measures. The other, to attack "the broken promises on the part of the British," ends up in a whitewash of British imperialism.

It should surprise no reader that Dennen defends British policy in Greece as a counterattack "against the totalitarian forces in Greece"; that the British intervention in Syria is justified as preventing "a general Arab anti-imperialist conflagration" which he seems to fear because, when Stalin's picture is shown in Egyptian theaters, "the Arabs cheer madly." As against Britain's policy in Palestine, which he glosses over, Mr. Dennen creates a diversion by attacking the Soviets for not admitting Jewish refugees in the Balkans, carefully ignoring the fact that, despite the enormous destruction of its never adequate housing, the Soviet Union is already sheltering hundreds of thousands of Jewish refugees from Eastern Europe.

From this pattern it requires no prophetic insight to gauge Mr. Dennen's position on anything. Every East European government that can be accused of that heinous sin, friendship for the Soviet Union, becomes a regime of evil; their enemies, including the quisling Mikhailovich, are given democratic haloes; and every government, present or past, that has played British imperialism's anti-Soviet game becomes a government of democracy and light.

Mr. Dennen being what he is, there is nothing surprising in this dreary mess of slander, misrepresentation and anti-Soviet provocation. The surprise is that any responsible publisher should issue it. However the publisher may rationalize it, the fact remains that Mr. Dennen's bias is obvious; and the publisher would be stupid indeed who did not recognize the danger of its incitement to war with Russia.

MARTIN BROWN.

Thriller Psychosis

METHINKS THE LADY, *by Guy Endore. Duell, Sloan & Pearce. $2.50.*

WITH so many of the makings of a good book in his grasp, it's a pity that Guy Endore held himself down to

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a tour de force. *Methinks the Lady* mates the detailed clinical record of a psychosis with a Hollywood murder mystery. Not that these are incompatible; they are just not quite enough to produce more than a very high-class thriller. When the quality is so high, though, perhaps one should not complain.

The fantasy killing of her double leads Mrs. Spence Gillian to believe that she may actually have committed the murder of which she is accused. The real murderer, Dave, a department store detective, knows enough of her mental state to try convincing her that she is guilty. She is saved by her husband, a prominent psychoanalyst, who, from a manuscript in which she describes her relations with Dave, deduces that the latter himself suffers from a deep and terrible mental conflict which could end in the murder of some woman who resembles his mother. The denouement is conventional. Dave, who has come as a spectator to the trial, runs to escape from the courtroom as he hears himself exposed. Mrs. Gillian, almost cured by the self-analysis involved in the writing of her life history, returns home to her all-understanding husband.

Mrs. Gillian's manuscript is a remarkable device. Beside the narrative, she employs a question and answer method in which her interlocutor functions both as analyst and as a projection of part of her personality. The use of free association, myths and dreams should be tremendously instructive to readers not familiar with psychoanalytic technique. The role of society in the development of the neurotic or psychotic individual is not forgotten. "Society prepares the crime, the individual merely commits it," says Dr. Cowan during an alienists' discussion of Mrs. Gillian's case. Endore's progressive social outlook gives body to this observation. It runs through Mrs. Gillian's description of her childhood of humiliating poverty and her struggle to adjust herself to a milieu whose demands and contrasts arouse her self-destructive guilt feelings.

The trouble is that Mr. Endore omits the whole sphere of action and its psychology. We know about the background, the confusion, the motives and the contradictory impulses of the characters, but nothing about the characters themselves. No series of acts leads up to the real and the imagined crime. There is simply no projection of the whole individual as a doer as well as a sufferer. The emotions are whittled down because they cannot find means of expression. (In the novel, that is.) Instead of the desperate humor of Dostoyevsky's double, "Mr. Golyadkin," there is witty and sophisticated commentary. We feel for the problem, but do not feel the human being. It is like intelligent case work. The job is more than adequate and yet the interviewer does not exhaust himself. But when a novelist has Mr. Endore's talent, it becomes his duty to exhaust himself—even when he has his eye on the movies.

CHARLES HUMBOLDT.

War's Children

. . . AND THE FIELD IS THE WORLD, *by Dola de Jong. Translated from the Dutch by A. van Duym. Scribner's. $2.50.*

"SUFFER little children. . . ." The fascists amended the Gospels. Suffer little children to be murdered, of course, but suffer them, too, to be mentally and morally and spiritually warped and maimed and twisted. The most realistic of photographs of the ragged and starved waifs of Spain, France, Poland, Russia, Greece and China can't do more than hint at the "hidden" wounds, the psychological blights cast over youthful minds by a world they never made and have no way of understanding.

Dola de Jong's . . . *And the Field Is the World,* a novel about refugee children in Africa, is written with considerable understatement and without sentimentality. It is shocking, it is true, but it is also, in a curious way, reassuring in its recognition of the incredible resilience of the human spirit. The setting of the book is an arid farm on the outskirts of Tangiers in Morocco. The time is 1941. In the barest of shacks live a Dutch couple, Aart and his wife Lies, their baby son Dolf and six "lost children" of different nationalities. Aart and Lies had left Holland when the war approached, because, as the children put it, "Aart wanted to get away from civilization."

The nearest to a leader among the children is Hans, a fifteen-year-old German boy who had been sent to France for safety by his parents, who were active in the anti-Nazi underground. Then there are Rainer, his slightly older compatriot; two Polish girls—Maria, highly-strung, tense, tortured, and her precocious eight-year-old sister, Luba; Berthe, a Belgian, and the four-year-old French child, Pierre, who does more than his share to try to keep things going.

When through a mistake Aart is

The novel of a man whose fear turned to hatred—and whose hatred turned against himself

At terrific speed, this explosive story carries its readers straight to the heart of a familiar and menacing situation—the secret plotting against America's Jews. This book will come to you as a memory, or as a revelation, or even as an accusation—but it must creep under your skin. $2.50

by Arthur Miller

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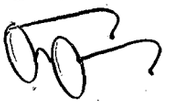

REYNAL & HITCHCOCK

Science & Society

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OLIVER LARKIN—Chairman of Art Dept., Smith College

2. ***JANUARY 18, 1946—***
Friday evening, 8:40 p.m.
"THE NEGRO AS AN ARTIST"
GWENDOLYN BENNETT—Director of George Washington Carver School
ARNAUD d'USSEAU—Co-Author of "Deep Are the Roots"
WILLIAM LAWRENCE—Composer & Instructor at the Metropolitan Music School

3. ***FEBRUARY 15, 1946—***
Friday evening, 8:40 p.m.
"CAN ART SURVIVE WITH ITS PRESENT PATRONAGE?"
HOLGER CAHILL—Writer on Art, Former National Administrator of the Arts Projects
HARRY GOTTLIEB—Outstanding American Painter and Guggenheim Fellow
DR. CHARLES OBERMAYER—Acting Educational Director, National Maritime Union

4. ***MARCH 21, 1946—***
Thursday evening, 8:40 p.m.
"ART CRITICISM IN AMERICA"
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taken to prison, young Hans takes over. He moves the children to the deserted white house on the hill, where, through his efforts, they have for the first time almost enough to eat. If in the process he learns a little more about the facts of life than is ordinarily deemed proper for young boys to know, it is something that can't be helped. It is to this haven Hans has built, this norm in a world where all values are topsy-turvy, that Luba returns from an unsavory experience, that Maria escapes from her charity refuge in the stuffy house of the Dutch consul.

In the end it is Hans, too, who arranges for their passage to Lisbon. But he, with the uncanny wisdom of youth, knows even that is not the final solution of their problems. "They were cattle, ready for shipping. They [the custom house men] probably thought that it would have been more appropriate if they had applied the stamp to their skin —instead of to their papers. I am one of them, thought Hans, a head of cattle."

Dola de Jong draws background for this powerful story from her own experience. She was a refugee in North Africa in 1940. Before that she had been widely recognized as a novelist in her native Holland. . . . *And the Field Is the World* is her first adult novel to be published in this country, though she has already won a reputation here for her children's books.

ROBIN MCKOWN.

Double Challenge

FOOD OR FAMINE: *The Challenge of Erosion, by Ward Shepard. Macmillan. $3.*

HAVING worked in the woods along the upper waters of the Delaware, I can back to the handle-end this picture of erosion. For the Delaware like other American rivers swallows billions of tons of the richest topsoil every year to belch it into the sea. Forests are butchered by private lumber companies. Gullies gut the land. Drouth and dust storms and floods follow, and if the farmers are not skinned off the land, they rot between the fences.

The significance of this book lies less in its picture of the destructiveness of erosion than in the methods advocated to combat it.

Ward Shepard is a veteran forester, an authority on conservation, and apparently an ardent New Dealer. He appeals for contour-plowing, strip-cropping, selective cutting of timber, reforestation, and river control. A champion of labor-management committees, he goes to bat for watershed control in which the federal government and the states would be joined by citizens representing agriculture, labor, industry and the consumer.

Ward Shepard does not indicate, however, that as many of the causes of erosion lie in the hog-eat-hog methods of capitalist production so the cure-all cannot be found in a setup where monopolists work feverishly to break the controls imposed by a liberal administration, helped by a wavering man from Missouri who is turning his back on the programs of his great predecessor. It is disappointing to find one so liberal and earnest as Mr. Shepard neglecting the experiences of the rank and file in his own country and the lessons to be learned from the work of the collective farmers of the Soviet Union. Shepard has nothing to say of the discoveries of erosion-fighters like county agent Faulkner of "Plowman's Folly" or Oklahoma sodbuster McDonald of "Old McDonald Had a Farm." And his treatment of Russia is limited to the misstatement that "the collective farmers are employes of technical managers," and the defensive declaration that in the long run the American farmer will be at least as productive while preserving the highly cherished American ideal of the family farm and individual enterprise.

A member of the Department of the Interior, Ward Shepard could have shown himself a more effective public servant had he drawn on these two deep wells—the pioneer work of our own grassroot farmers and the startling achievements of the cooperative farmers of our ally.

BEN FIELD.

Museum Piece

SCIENCE AND THE PLANNED STATE, *by John R. Baker. Macmillan. $1.75.*

UNFORTUNATELY for Dr. Baker, his book was on the presses when the atom bomb blew his thesis higher than the smoke over Hiroshima. Intended as an answer to the arguments of the brilliant spokesmen for a planned science program, J. D. Bernal, J. B. S. Haldane and J. G. Crowther, Dr. Baker contends that individual initiative is more efficient than planning. If Dr. Baker had his way, the atom-smashers or radar engineers would never have sat down to plan the organized attack on their problems that brought such astounding achievements.

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The Oxford lecturer claims that "the scientist of today is often cynically indifferent to the early history of his subject." Just imagine Professor Oppenheimer refusing to consider Mendeleyev's periodic table, or Mosely's atomic numbers or Thomson's electron or the Curies' discoveries in radio-activity! To this snobbish scientist the terms "scientific worker" is abhorrent; it "lends itself to use by those who would surreptitously insinuate some special bond of unity between the scientist and the factory worker." This section of the book reads like something out of a Dies Committee report and reminds one of the time when the retired Congressman from Texas condemned sociology as a subversive doctrine. One expects more intelligence from even a reactionary scientist.

Of course, such a book could not be complete without an attack on the USSR. Dr. Baker asserts that Soviet scientists have done nothing outstanding. He ignores Kapitza's fundamental work on the superfluid state, Lysenko's research and applications in the field of vernalization, the famous restoration of life experiments, the organization of blood banks and Red Army medicine. The outstanding British and American research workers who attended the 220th anniversary celebration of the Soviet Academy reported a high quality of work, with the Russians leading in the biological and agricultural sciences. They declared that in about twenty years the scientists of the USSR would be in the leadership in most fields. Testifying at the atomic energy hearings of the Senate Dr. Irving Langmuir said, "the Russians have a tendency to proceed at a more rapid rate than we do." Dr. Baker's fulminations belong on the museum shelf along with the racial theories of Hitler and the philosophy of Herbert Hoover.

JAMES KNIGHT.

Love Stuff

REPRIEVE, *by Warwick Deeping. Dial. $2.50.*
WOMAN WITHOUT LOVE, *by Andre Maurois. Harper. $2.50.*
A LADY LIKE THE MOON, *by Genevieve Wimsatt. Bernard Ackerman. $2.75.*

OF THIS trio of unexciting novels of "love," *Reprieve* is the one of a man who, when told he has only a few months to live, leaves his family, travels, finds a true love and discovers he is really in good health. He thereupon settles down like dust on one of Warwick Deeping's books, of which there are more than five dozen.

Woman Without Love is undistinguished except for its unusual subject—frigidity. The objective characterization of an inhibited adult is credible enough, but Maurois is less convincing in his tracing of the course. From the evidence she might have caught her affliction from the author's adjectives. We get "frigid staircase," "frigid tower stairs," "frigid exterior," "ironic and frigid," "frigid soul," etc. From a strictly medical point of view, this frigid atmosphere, plus her "damp sheets," should have given her arthritis.

A Lady Like the Moon is an imaginative biography of a legendary seventeenth-century Chinese beauty. It has touches of excellent craftsmanship but the author is not able to overcome the sketchiness inherent in a narrative covering a period of fifty-six years.

MACK ENNIUS.

Worth Noting

THE Poetry Society is offering a $100 first prize and a fifty-dollar second prize in their Lola Ridge Memorial award for poems of social significance. Final date for entries is Jan. 1, 1946. Manuscripts should be sent to Gustav Davidson, 227 E. 45th St., New York City.

ACCORDING to rumors the New York *Daily News* has been feeling the effect of the reader-advertiser boycott so much that it has begun to censor the O'Donnell copy. Rumor has it that a choice O'Donnellism calling Benedict Arnold a piker as compared to Roosevelt when it came to selling out the country, was one of the blue-pencilled items.

A GIFT of a cigarette box to Albert Maltz, who wrote the script of *The House I Live In,* from Frank Sinatra, who sang in it, carried the inscription inside the cover: "Dear Albert: *The House I Live In* is the house you live in. Let's pack the house.".

The Soviet Novel

(*Continued from page 16*)

was an apolitical book. What childishness that is! Politics is one of the basic struggles of mankind; war itself, by definition of Clausewitz, is an armed extension of politics.

How, then, could a war book be apolitical? What is this insane nullification on the part of our critics that leads them to shower with praise any man who has no point of view? What sort

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of a human being can go through life with no point of view?

As a matter of fact, Simonov's new book is intensely political; it is naive to think that a Soviet writer could come to maturity under socialism and write a full length novel of the war, which socialism fought for survival, and at the same time produce a novel with no political content! When you read Simonov's book, you find a constant interrelation of (1) the hero, (2) the battalion he commands, (3) the regiment of which the battalion is a part, (4) the division, (5) the army corps that defends Stalingrad, (6) The Red Army that defended the whole of the Soviet Union, (7) the Soviet people who stand behind the Red Army, and last Stalin, the commander in chief. Woven into this, and through it, is the role of the Communist Party of Russia as the coordinating force. It is the philosophy of the writer, his relation to his own society, that enables him to integrate all these parts into a fluid, exciting and dramatic whole. At times he does this overtly, as for example when, dog-tired after a battle, he and his political commissar listen to Stalin's speech on the twenty-sixth anniversary of the October Revolution. At other times he does it far more subtly, but emphasizes over and over the bond that connects the Russian soldier with the Russian people. You never feel that Saburov, the hero, fights alone; he fights as part of a people, as part of a society, of an idea, of a plan. This is the reality of life, the dialectic reality of many, many forces always in motion, always affecting each other.

Yet it's rather pathetic to note obliquely that even the translator of this book, Joseph Barnes, stated in a publicity release that three kinds of Americans would not like Simonov's book: reactionaries, Trotskyites and Communists. There's the parting note in a discussion of reality and the Soviet writer. A Soviet writer, who is a member of the Communist Party, writes a book about the greatest life and death struggle the Communist Party of any land ever led —and yet this translator has the gall to predict that Communists of other lands will dislike the book!

The world we live in is a very real world. A writer who approaches it on any other basis than an understanding of its many complexities will always to a degree fail; the lesser writer who approaches this same world with both humanism and a scientific approach to the forces concerned will, to a larger degree, succeed.

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SIGHTS and SOUNDS

THE IMPORTATION LEADS AGAIN

By JOSEPH FOSTER

A QUARTET of Swiss film-makers —Lazar Wechsler, producer, Leopold Lindtberg, director, Richard Schweitzer, writer, and Emil Berna, cameraman—can give us lessons in the making of war films, as was shown in *Mary Louise* and now, again, in *The Last Chance*. In *Mary Louise*, their concern was the child refugee; in *The Last Chance* (Criterion) they deal with adult refugees escaping from Italy to Switzerland. Their films lack the slicktrick technique of the Americans, but they are far ahead of us in the more important qualities of realism and sensitivity.

The photography in *The Last Chance* is so like the work of Pudovkin that some of these men might have studied with him. Each shot is carefully composed with reference to physical meaning. The use of sky, reeds and water as a frame for the actors gives a sharp sense of the character of the country. Whereas these producers used the Alps in *Mary Louise* as an anodyne for the bombed-out children, here these same peaks loom as a menace to the fleeing refugees. Backgrounds thus both contribute atmosphere and enter into and underline the action.

Dramatic interest is introduced with the very first scene. A Nazi prison train enroute to Germany from Italy is bombed, enabling the prisoners to escape, among them an American and an English flyer, who figure as the central characters in the story. Both these actors, actual flyers interned in Switzerland for the duration, play their roles with fresh and instinctive realism. But for the sake of the script they are somewhat distorted as people, and compelled to unnatural, boorish behavior, in order to stress the picture's moral: that the end purpose of anti-fascism is the universal humanity that the world needs for survival.

It is worked out as follows: The two English-speaking flyers, feeling themselves superior to the Italians who help them in their escape, grumble about their conditions. This attitude reaches a climax at the Italian-Swiss frontier town, where the American refers to the refugees at the inn as "a bunch of jerks." When the guide who is to lead them over the mountains is killed, the issue is abruptly shoved into the open. Should the soldiers take the refugees with them or assure their own escape by going it alone?

With the Nazi patrols coming closer, the refugees face certain death unless they are helped. The director shrewdly weights the argument in their favor by introducing each with thorough care. The camera dwells upon their careworn faces, their pitiable, threadbare belongings. There is Hillel, the Polish Jew, on the move since 1938, with Chanele, his frail niece; an anti-fascist German woman and her young son, whose eyes speak more than a volume of words; a Yugoslav worker; a professor clutching a battered suitcase containing his life work on minorities in Europe, and a group of Italian children. No human being could stand up against the combined eloquence of their needs. In the quiet acquiescence of the flyers is contained a note of human triumph that no handshakes, appropriate chords of music or sudden sun bursts could equal.

The straggling, desperate climb over the mountains provides the film with some of its best moments: the old Jew praying to his God as he struggles through the snow, the company catching a hasty respite in a ruined mountain shack, singing the French round *Frere Jacques*, in cracked, tired voices; the mad scramble to make the last few yards to safety as the Nazi patrol catches up, the weary relief in the Swiss frontier station. Most of the actors are refugees, but even the professionals look the part. This accounts for the bone-aching reality that gives the film its tremendous wallop.

The dialogue for the most part is English, but some five or six additional languages are used, with good titles keeping the meaning clear. The Jews speak Yiddish, and act and look as you would expect them to. This reflects a bit of honesty that Hollywood never permits. Except for the brief interlude in *None Shall Escape*, even films combatting anti-Semitism (however rare) make their Jews as non-Jewish as possible.

IF WE have been fortunate in our importations, we have not been so lucky with our Hollywood pictures. Except for the name players, it is difficult to distinguish one pirate picture or musical from another. Scorning the real world around it, Hollywood means to ride us around in a Tunnel of Love, or keep us wrapped up in riddles by Agatha Christie. Maybe our film giants figure that during the Christmas season (that begins with the shop-early-and-often signs) people are in high spirits engendered by the end of the war or by the more customary stimulants, and hence unable to distinguish steak from marshmallow.

The loudest merchandise current is the pretentious *Saratoga Trunk*, which contains the best and the worst of Hollywood. It is beautifully constructed, reflecting painstaking research and special effects. It includes a railroad collision that European producers would give their eye teeth to be able to duplicate, New Orleans Creole interiors, and gowns that make you forget about technicolor.

But when you've said all this you've said everything good about it. Instead of cinematic movement you get lots of moving around—trains, people, horses, buggies constantly rushing from place to place. Imbedded in this large background are Ingrid Bergman, as a Creole beauty, and Gary Cooper, a dashing, gambling Texan, who makes her roll over and say daddy. The relationship between them is so synthetic that, deprived of all the trappings, it would not survive an old time two-reeler. Behavior motivation is based upon Bergman's choice for marriage between a scion of wealth and the gambler. Naturally, since the wealthy suitor is *not* played by Cooper, the wealthy suitor is the stinker, a comparison which led a friend of mine to remark "poverty isn't everything."

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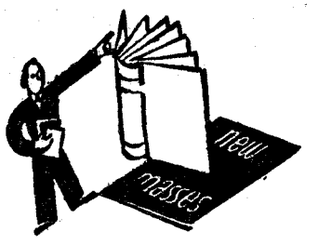

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"DANGER SIGNAL" (Victoria) is a Warner B that attempts to use the growing interest in psychiatry to put itself over. Zachary Scott, who smirked with great distinction in *Mildred Pierce*, is the villain of the piece, but here he is dull and unmoving, the story and direction being against him. For a movie audience that popularly defines a wolf as the man nearest any given woman, his unprincipled way with the fairer sex is hardly a characteristic out of which to build effective melodrama. To its B dimensions director Florey contributes some further handicaps. It is tiresome to see characters express ecstacy over the most trivial experience. It is a little like the figures in the ads who, beset by a tire puncture in a blinding snowstorm, are gripped by a frenzy of joy because they are the proud users of an Easy Fit lug wrench.

On Broadway

HARRY BROWN's novel, *A Walk in the Sun*, was highly praised in some quarters and questioned in others as an accurate picture of men at war. His play about soldiers will probably be more widely questioned; but it does provide amusement a good part of the evening.

Its jokes, as a matter of fact, are the cause of the most serious defect of *A Sound of Hunting*. For when the curtain rises on a wrecked building near Cassino, and eight friendly GI's occupy it at the supposed risk of their lives, the slightest jarring of one's sense of reality is likely to throw the whole play into the realm of the spurious. Mr. Brown, with a gift for dialogue that gallops away with him, is not averse to ruining a scene for the sake of a crack, and after five minutes one settles back in full realization that what is going to take place will be purely theatrical and a bit of a travesty on the tragic urgency behind the action.

The story seems too meager for a full length play, although not necessarily so in the right hands. A squad of soldiers, about to be relieved at the front, discover that one of their men is caught out in a semi-exposed spot within reach of German gunfire. Whether to leave their stranded comrade for the relief troops, or risk going out after him themselves, is the dramatic problem set in the play. It is one designed to call forth the deepest sentiments of unit pride and unit comradeship, the commonest and possibly the most unforget-

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table emotions a combat man comes to feel.

In a story so circumscribed any truly dramatic action that ensues can only come out of a continuous peeling off of layers of character, one of the most difficult projects a playwright can tackle. Mr. Brown's soldiers often show signs of becoming differentiated, but at those moments the necessity to cap the previous joke reconverts them into actors speaking for the amusement of the audience.

However, it should be repeated that though the jokes are at the play's expense they are often funny and the play may meet with, and deserve, an unintentional success in this regard. The acting is generally impassioned and direct. Sam Levine as Private Colucci demonstrates his fine sense of timing and the warm soul of an honest performer; with him, as Pfc. Coke, is one of radio's best actors, Frank Lovejoy. The rest of the cast deliver in good spirits. Samuel Leve's set is a ruined house that is really ruined. Anthony Brown's direction, although competent as far as movement goes, drew the actors' attention to their lines instead of themselves, thus weakening the play's fidelity to its situation.

ON NOVEMBER 24 and 25, the Dramatic Workshop of the New School, with Erwin Piscator as director, put on a thirteenth-century Chinese fantasy, *The Circle of Chalk*, adapted by Klabund. An amateur acting effort, the play nevertheless was historically interesting, especially in that its story had all the elements of a *Cosmopolitan* Magazine feature installment novel or a technicolor romance, with the addition of a strong note of social revolt. Seeing this fairy tale of a girl sold to a brothel who ends up marrying the young Emperor in Peking, one is saddened at how short a way we have come in so long a time, for if anybody from Universal was in the theater I'm sure he'd have tried to sign up the author for pictures and bought the play as well (on the provision, of course, that the social content be edited out). The director of this production was Chouteau Dyer. The Workshop also presented *Tonight We Improvise*, by Luigi Pirandello, too late for review in this issue. Plays by Shaw, Chekhov, Tolstoy, Gorky and Hauptmann will follow through February. A good way to spend your evenings if you want a taste of what the theater can do when it isn't kidding.

MATT WAYNE.

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When, after these concerts, I tried in my own mind to appraise Hindemith's development in the last twenty years, and to establish more precisely the essential quality of his genius, it struck me that though he has lost somewhat in assurance the essential character of his work has not changed. The highlight of these concerts was the very early *Die Junge Magd*, composed in 1922 as a setting for Georg Trakl's romantic-realistic poem. This is one of the great pieces of modern music—especially remarkable for the extraordinary success with which Hindemith conjures up a mood. Against a vocal portion (sung by Enid Szantho) almost declamatory in style is set an orchestral accompaniment of magnificent dramatic and emotional power. This work certainly proved that Hindemith's genius is in the lyrical and vocal line; and his equally magnificent and imaginative modern settings of old texts served to strengthen this conviction. His modern polyphonic style has caught the freshness and filigree skill of the Renaissance madrigal—and even the extraordinary violin and piano sonata (performed by Isaac Stern and Alexander Zakin) was really a beautiful lyric poem. In my opinion, this is one of the very great violin sonatas.

But in the compositions of the immediate present I do not see the same assurance and firmness. I certainly did not sense them in *Herodiade*, written for Martha Graham, after the poem by Mallarme; the composition seemed fulsome and most decadent and recessive. I did not sense them in the String Quartet written in 1943. These seemed rather tours de force, expertly constructed, but without spontaneity.

The performances were in all respects admirable. Hindemith himself conducted with great skill. In one instance—when he obtained audience participation in the singing of Luther's *In Praise of Music*—he made me wish that he would do more in the cause of mass singing. What

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would happen, for example, if he found poems by Sandburg or Frost or some other contemporary poet as congenial to his taste as a medieval lyric? Hindemith is a great tone-poet; must his eyes always be fixed on the past?

WHAT to hear in New York: New York City Symphony, City Center, Monday evenings. . . . Maggie Teyte, soprano, Town Hall, December 19. . . . Marian Anderson, Carnegie Hall, December 30. . . . American Youth Orchestra, Hunter College, January 19. . . . The Bach Choir, Carnegie Hall, February 18.

FREDERIC EWEN.

Records

SERGE EISENSTEIN'S moving picture *Alexander Nevsky* evoked one of Prokofieff's most brilliant scores. This music is now available on records in an extraordinarily fine performance by the Philadelphia Orchestra under Eugene Ormandy. Prokofieff revised and enlarged the original score—and, I would add, enriched it. The unforgettable and thrilling passages are all there, including the famous battle on the ice. In addition there are the impressive choruses and the wonderful song on the field of the dead. Orchestra, Westminster Choir, and Jennie Tourel perform admirably, and Columbia is to be congratulated on this new set. (MM-580.)

Another unusual album of Russian music is that put out by Asch. This consists of excerpts from Borodin's opera, *Prince Igor*, as recorded at the Moscow State Theater. Mechanically the set is excellent; and the reproduction on the new, "unbreakable" records is faithful. The singing is very good, especially that of the bass, M. Mikhailov; as is to be expected, the choral parts are first-rate. Some objection may be taken to the choice of pieces, which seems somewhat haphazard, especially when anti-climactic solos follow the vivid and exhilarating Polovetzian dances. But the album is well worth getting. (Asch 800.)

Schubert's *Sixth Symphony in C* is not too well known. It is less majestic than the famous Seventh, and less consistently melodious than the Unfinished. But it is a beautiful thing, none the less, and Sir Thomas Beecham and the London Philharmonic Orchestra do wonders with it, in a recording that is marked by delicacy, sympathy and fine musicianship. (Victor, DM-1014, seven twelve-inch sides; eighth side: Serenade from Mozart's *Eine kleine Nachtmusik*.)

F. E.

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